

2/6

A

NEW COLLECTION OF FABLES IN VERSE.

Intended to implant *prudential, benign, and beneficent* sentiments in the heart; and bend the mind to the practice of *social virtues, and christian graces.*

By JOHN TAPNER,
Of Boxgrove, Sussex. — *H.*

Philosophers, who nature knew,
In *similes* their maxims drew:
They preach'd in elegant *disguise*;
By *fiction* taught us to be wise:
Cull'd ev'ry beauty nature yields,
And moraliz'd from woods and fields.

All nature, thro' a *moral-glass* behold;
And what you view will turn to purest gold.

“ Among all the different ways of giving counsel, I think the finest, and that which bids fairest to please universally, is FABLE, “ in whatsoever shape it appears.”

SPECTATOR.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Bew, Paternoster-row, C. Jaques, Chichester,
and J. Tapner, Boxgrove.

46

9 4
824



Introduction, or Preface.

FABLE can boast of great antiquity. It has been more or less cultivated in all ages; particularly in those times of simplicity, when mankind, studying the *dispositions, qualities, and properties of nature*, both in *animal* and *vegetative* life, deduced from this *uncorrupted fountain* their *prudential, economical, and moral* notions of *human nature* itself. Thus reasoning, they were neither bewilder'd in the subtle mazes of disputation, nor bigotted to any fine-spun theories or systems. Their's was the language of the *plain, unalterable, and undeniable laws of nature*.

It would perhaps be judged quite unnecessary to endeavour here to point out the numerous elegancies and beauties to be found in the allegorical writings of the ancients: I shall therefore content myself with observing that many such are to be found in the *parables of scripture*; particularly in those of *the poor man and the lamb*, (by *Nathan to David*) and the *good Samaritan*, (by our blessed Lord himself) both which are striking instances of this kind of writing: they are fraught with such *tender and animating strokes*; the intentions of them are pursued with such *powerful influence*; that they have

been justly held in admiration by all ages; and universally allowed to be master-pieces of the kind.

The learned Dr. *Fordyce* has observed, that “the mind is disposed to be peculiarly fond of *works of imagination*;” and that “when such works are blended with instruction, they have a particular claim to attention: In this view,” proceeds he, “we must not forget to recommend *fables, visions, allegories*, and such like compositions, where fancy sports under the controul of reason.”

The fables here committed to the public eye, it is hoped will be found such as (under the borrowed dress of *allegory*) tend to inculcate *social virtues* and *christian graces*; as *humility, condescension, meekness, patience, resignation, justice, gratitude, fidelity, temperance, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, benevolence, and charity*; either by pointing out the *benefits, advantages* and *happiness* resulting to mankind from the practice of them, or by showing the *disadvantages, evil consequences, or destruction* which attend the votaries of *pride, ambition, discontent, injustice, ingratitude, falsehood, intemperance, cruelty, revenge, oppression, avarice, &c.*

What has been already said, together with the following short poetical apology for writings of this kind, will, it is presumed, afford ample reasons or motives for the present publication.

All

All *simple fables* are of use ;
 Their *moral*s still some *good* produce ;
 For whether wrote in *verse* or *prose*,
 They *wish* their *allegoric clothes*
 Clad *virtue* gay, to *charm* by *fight*,
 And *dress* out *vice* to cause *affright* :
 They show *pride*'s *folly*, *passion*'s *cheat*,
 And *undeceive* us by *deceit*.

As to the style or diction of the work, I shall only observe with *Mr. Pope*, that

- “ Some haunt *Parnassus* but to *please* their *ear*,
- “ Not mend their *minds* ; as some to *church* repair,
- “ Not for the *doctrine*, but the *music* there.
- “ Others for *language* all their care express,
- “ And value *books*, as women *men*,—for *dress* :
- “ Their praise is still, the *style* is excellent ;
- “ The *sense* they humbly take upon *content*.
- “ But some *conceits*, in *pompous words* express'd,
- “ Appear like *clowns* in *regal purple dress*'d :
- “ For *diff'rent styles* with *diff'rent subjects* sort,
- “ As sev'ral *garbs*, with *country*, *town*, and *court*.

I have now only to add, that as it is easy to find out imperfections in all human performances, I would entreat the *reader* to peruse this collection with a design of being pleased ; and to let the *real intention* of it, (which is to promote the *good* and *virtuous ends* before mentioned,) plead an excuse for all its defects.

vino und 1 zwanzig Pfund Butter oder Butter
zum Kochen, kein brausado

zu haben. Und das ist der Vorschrift für ein
Brot zu einem Festmahl. Wenn sie mir die Butter und
nichts anderes aufgefordert haben, so kann es keinen Unterschied
mehr machen, ob sie es mit Butter oder ohne Butter
wollen. Aber wenn sie mir gesagt haben, dass sie
keine Butter wollen, so kann ich nicht mehr daran denken.

ZWEI

I N D E X.

F A B L E I.

The OLD MAN, his SON, and ASS.

Tho' it may, perhaps, be vain, fruitless, and absurd, to hope or expect that *our utmost endeavours to please all mankind* should procure us *universal approbation*; we should, nevertheless, not fail to use such means as our reason, upon due consideration, points out as most likely to *deserve it.*

Page 1

F A B L E II.

The PINE and WILLOW.

This fable tends to correct *pride, arrogance, and ostentation*; and to cultivate *humility*. This instant only is *our own*, the next is in the womb of futurity! We know not what it may bring forth.—*Vicissitudes, or changes sudden as the whirlwinds of the desert, may destroy all the boasted splendor of the great, and level them with their menials.*

Page 5

F A B L E III.

The WOOD LARK and LINNET;

Or the GILDED CAGE.

Tho' in general 'tis opinion more than *necessity* that renders men *unhappy*, yet certain it is, that we cannot set too high a value on *natural freedom*. *Liberty* is a *choice blessing*: but the most *splendid captivity* renders all our joys *insipid*, and even life itself *burthensome*.

Page 8
FABLE

(viii)

F A B L E IV.

The NIGHTINGALE and GLOW-WORM.

The very object of our *pride* is often the cause of our misfortunes. *Pride* and *arrogance*, raised on account of mere *personal accomplishments*, many times prove the source of *ruin*.

Page 11

F A B L E V.

The D R O P of W A T E R.

In every state of life, under every *grievance* and *affliction* which may befall us, we should not become *hopeless*, nor give way to *despondency*: but on the contrary, we should raise our *fortitude*, and pursue every *virtuous design* unmoved by discouragements; in full assurance of the *Almighty power of God*; firmly relying on his *Providence* for *redress*.

Page 13

F A B L E VI.

The B E E S and D R O N E S.

Idleness, laziness, and dishonesty, subject us to *poverty, reproach, shame, and contempt*; and seldom fail, either soon or late, of meeting with *adequate punishment*.

Page 16

F A B L E VII.

The F A T A L I N Q U I S I T O R.

The design of this *fable* is to check the *impious desire of prying into futurity*: to inculcate *contentment*, and an *humble resignation* to the decrees of God's providence. Innumerable *fears, sorrows, and anxieties*, are generally the consequences of the *idle and needless curiosity* of all solicitous enquiries into things which might safely remain for ever *secret*, and were better *unknown*.

Page 19

F A B L E VIII.

The P A I N T E D L A D Y.

Reflections may be drawn from this *fable* against all sorts of *impostors*, *vain pretenders*, &c. but suffice it to say here, that the *folly* pride and *vanity* of aiming to excel others in *personal beauty*, by *borrowed charms*, render us *deservedly contemptible*.

Page 23

F A B L E IX.

S U C C E S S and D I S A P P O I N T M E N T.

This *fable* is particularly levelled against the *proud, haughty, insolent, and uncharitable rich*. When all looks fair about us, and we see not a *cloud* so big as a *hand*, to threaten us, we should not forget the wheel of things. “ The lot is cast into “ the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” “ Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

Page 27

F A B L E X.

The F A I R I N C O N S T A N T;
Or the L A D Y and L I N N E T.

This *fable* is particularly addressed to every *false and fickle fair*; but tho’ *chiefly* intended to dissuade from *coquetry*; is in general designed to cultivate *fidelity, constancy, sincerity, and gratitude*, in *friendship, &c.* as well as in *love*.

Page 30

(x)

F A B L E XI.

P O V E R T Y I N S U L T E D;

Or the C A S E I S A L T E R E D.

Let *insulted poverty*, walking in the paths of *virtue*, rest always comforted under the assurance that *divine providence will*, when most expedient for us, render us ample rewards for our patient sufferings.

Page 37

F A B L E XII.

P O V E R T Y R E W A R D E D;

Or the C A S E R E - A L T E R E D.

Let the rich and powerful, acting with *fraud, violence, and oppression*, reflect that *guilt cannot be expelled the breast, without extreme anxiety proceeding from remorse of conscience*: And that if it be not timely expelled by a sincere and hearty *repentance*, but suffered to remain and rankle in the heart, may destroy them eternally.

Page 40

F A B L E XIII.

The S P A R R O W, the H A W K, and
the B U T T E R F L Y.

Oppression and cruelty, pleading for *compassion and mercy*, from those who know their nature; justly deserve to be treated with the most rigorous punishment.—For what villain can have the presumption to hope for that *compassion and mercy* from others, for which he was ever sued to in vain?

Page 45

F A B L E

(xi)

F A B L E XIV.

The G O O S E and S W A N S.

The folly of censuring the persons, abilities, or gestures of our superiors; or endeavouring to personate them, by aiming to act parts for which nature never designed us; will undoubtedly expose us to universal ridicule and contempt. Page 49

F A B L E XV.

The F O R E S T and O C E A N.

Pride, envy, and discontent, are productive of numerous evils; and oftentimes lead men to utter ruin.—Whence it is very reasonable to conclude, that it highly behoves every man to be humble, resigned, and contented, in whatsoever state the all-wise author of nature has been pleased to place him. Page 53

F A B L E XVI.

The C O C K and D O V E S.

The comforts, joys, and happiness which flow from the connubial state, where virtuous hearts, as well as hands are joined, doubtless exceed, beyond any degree of comparison, those boasted to be enjoyed by the rake and libertine.—The latter, says Solomon, lead to the chambers of death.—The former, in the language of Dr. Watts, are the first, and best, of earthly comforts, and mortal blessings. Page 59

F A B L E XVII.

VICE and VIRTUE, or the EXPERIMENT.

Poverty cannot, without the concurrence of *vice*, by any means effectually destroy our *happiness*, either here, or hereafter: Whereas *vice* alone can render us *miserable* to the last extremity, both in our *present* and *future* state.—*Conscious virtue* enjoys an inward satisfaction here; which is heightened into an exquisite pleasure, by the consolations resulting from the well-grounded hope of *future glory*.—But *vice* not only subjects it's votaries to many *painful sufferings* here, but it's concomitant *guilt* destroys all hopes of *future happiness*, and threatens it with *eternal ruin*.

Page 64

F A B L E XVIII.

The BUTTERFLY and BOY.

We are too apt, under the pretence of seeking after *happiness*, to waste the greater part of our days in the pursuit of objects, many of which *elude our every hope*, and leave us totally *disappointed*.—Others, when obtained, yield us but a *momentary satisfaction* before they *satiate*, and become even *disgusting*.

Page 69

F A B L E XIX.

The TRIUMPH of VICE.

Tho' by the appointment, or permission of Providence, *virtue* MAY suffer here below; and *vice*, for a while prove prosperous, and *seemingly happy*;—yet it still behoves the *truly virtuous*, to bear up under all troubles and persecutions, to look forward, and keep in view, the great! the awful day of *retribution!*

Page 72
FABLE

F A B L E XX.

The SEQUEL to the TRIUMPH of VICE.

Dreadful! woe! and truly deplorable indeed! is the state of that man, who wishes for death, only to release him from the bitter pangs, and inexpressible anguish of a guilty conscience.

Page 75

F A B L E XXI.

The HARE and PARTRIDGE.

If we come within the purlieus of a set of men who professedly live by *theft, rapine, and murder*; and who many times, on trivial occasions, perpetrate these horrid acts, even upon their acquaintance and near neighbours; it is no wonder that we should in some degree, become sufferers by them.

Page 79

F A B L E XXII.

The PHEASANT and BLACKBIRD

Our discontent and unhappiness generally arise from our making false estimates of the powers, abilities, situation, advantages, or disadvantages in life, of ourselves and others: For could every man really know the inconveniences, dangers, troubles, and griefs which attend others; the burthens of human nature would, perhaps, appear to be more equally portioned out by providence, than men generally imagine.—To be contented in our respective stations, is the best, if not the only means to render us happy.

Page 84

FABLE

F A B L E XXIII.

The A N T ' S P H I L O S O P H Y .

This fable is intended to dissuade men from the practice of the shameful and scandalous vices (for vices they really are) of indolence and voluptuousness: and to excite them to the practice of industry, temperance, and sobriety, which tend as well to their own private interest and happiness, as to promote the prosperity and welfare of society.—“ The sluggard shall beg in harvest, “ and have nothing; but the hand of the diligent maketh rich. “ —The drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and “ drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.”

Page 87

F A B L E XXIV.

M I N E R V A and A R A C H N E .

Beauty, genius, and ingenuity, accompanied with modesty, humility, and good-nature, irresistibly gain respect and esteem: Whereas haughtiness, arrogance, pride, presumption, and insolence, render the possessors of the most excellent endowments, or qualifications, not only the objects of disregard, scorn and contempt amongst men, but also obnoxious to the displeasure of God, by their neglect of rendering humble thanks, as grateful returns for those blessings, as bounties of his goodness.

Page 91

F A B L E XXV.

The H A P P Y M O L E .

Since Providence has undoubtedly furnished every individual of its creatures with powers and talents best suited to their several ranks, degrees, and stations in life, it is therefore a sign of wisdom in every man, to rest perfectly satisfied with his own endowments: And on the contrary it discovers want of understanding, and must be displeasing to God, to be guilty of discontent,

discontent, murmuring, and repining under our present state and abilities, as appointed by him: and we may also justly conclude that it must reflect dishonour on the great author of nature, to undervalue, disparage, or turn into ridicule the faculties of others.

Page 94

F A B L E XXVI.

The P E L I C A N and S P I D E R:

This *Fable* is addressed to every MOTHER, of whatsoever rank or degree.

—Let not the *scriptural-proverb* be applicable to thee, which says, “As was the mother, so is her daughter: “Thou art thy mother’s daughter, who loathed her husband and her children:—Thou art the sister of thy sisters, who loath their husbands and their children.”

Page 98

F A B L E XXVII.

The B O Y and P O P P Y.

External beauty, or mere personal attractions, are many times looked upon by the ignorant and less discerning part of mankind, as the highest, and most valuable perfections:—But certain it is, that the internal accomplishments, or endowments of the mind only; such as good-sense, accompanied with good-nature and a virtuous heart, can render a person truly amiable, and worthy of our continual respect and esteem.

Page 104

F A B L E XXVIII.

The TULIP and the LILY of the VALLEY.

Sir Thomas More always disdainfully laughed at, and highly condemned, the man who despised his neighbour, or shunned his company merely on account of his *inferior fortune, or meaner*

meaner dress:—And it must indeed be owing to pride, arrogance, and ostentation, which always denote a bad heart, or a weak understanding; that men deprecate, despise, or disregard, modest worth, and real merit, under whatever circumstances or garb they may appear.

Page 108

F A B L E XXIX.

The CATERPILLAR and BUTTERFLY.

The aim of this fable is not only to recal the attention of the *sensual* and *voluptuous* to their true *temporal interest*; but also to rouse and deter them from a yet more unaccountable, and fatal infatuation; the risking, for the *short, vain, transient*, and soon *dissolving* pleasures of this life, a certain, perfect, and everlasting state of felicity, in a life to come.

Page 111

F A B L E XXX.

The DOVE and ANT.

Though to give unto every one that asketh, may seem severe advice; yet give thou even before asking:—For tho' want may be silent;—necessity dumb; and misery not cry aloud;—true christian charity is sagacious, and so well skilled in physiognomy, as to find out other hints for exercising its mercy and benevolence.

—We may all, soon or late, stand in need of the assistance of others; and even the meanest may not always be incapable of rendering us service, or of returning an obligation: And generous, humane, and grateful spirits will (if ever in their power) repay kindness with interest.—But however this may be, true christian benevolence (without any returns from the objects on whom its amiable attributes are employed) affords the mind a secret satisfaction, and rapturous kind of pleasure; infinitely exceeding that which a *fordid soul* experiences from the most lucrative rewards.

Page 118.

F A B L E

F A B L E XXXI.

H Y M E N and D E A T H.

The greatest vexations and miseries of the marriage state, arise from a conjunction of two persons of quick feeling and resentment, formed for reasons well known to their friends, to avoid (what they think the greatest of evils) poverty; and to ensure to them riches, with every evil besides.—Such pairs when in company are in purgatory; when alone in hell: From which truly deplorable state, nothing less than death or divorce—
ment can set them free.

Page 123.

F A B L E XXXII.

The FOP, the COCK, and the DIAMOND.

A contented mind is the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in this world; and as all the real wants, conveniences, and true pleasures of life, lie in a very narrow compass; a wise man, considering how much he has more than he wants, will rest himself contented and happy: But foolish men, considering more what they have lost, and what they unreasonably crave for, than what they possess; are not only uneasy and dissatisfied under their circumstances, but generally commit the sin of ingratitude against the supreme being, by murmurings and repinings:—The continual perturbation and anxiety of mind of this class of mortals many times precipitate them to an untimely grave.

Page 127.

F A B L E XXXIII.

The TRAVELLER and RAINBOW.

Mankind in general are more apt to be taken with appearances, than with realities;—the noise, glitter, and pomp of a mere pretender to merit, too often flash upon, excite, and engross

engross their attention; while the *modest, understanding, and truly worthy man*, too often passes *unregarded*; or is made the object of their *ridicule and contempt*.—We should therefore learn (from our Blessed Saviour) to “judge not according to the appearance ‘only, but to judge righteous judgment.”

Page 133.

F A B L E XXXIV.

The TWO MICE and the LINNET,
Or the PLEASURE-SEEKERS;
Or the WAY to HAPPINESS.

Mere *sensual pleasures*, prove not only *frail, fleeting, and unsatisfactory*, but even *disgusting*; and generally leave the sense with a disrelish of every thing else.—The intermediate seasons of the *man of pleasure*, produce nothing better than *impatient thoughts, and inordinate desires*:—His *youth* is generally rendered *inglorious*, and his *age shameful*.—But *mental pleasures*, which proceed from the *practice of virtue*; prove not only the source of *joy and satisfaction thro' life*; they also afford reflections which will *soften the agonies of death*; their influence extends to those parts of our *existence* which lie *beyond the grave*; and they will cast forth rays to illumine our passage into the *blissful regions of uninterrupted felicity*.

Page 135.

F A B L E XXXV.

The DOG and the CRANE,
Or TRUE CHRISTIAN HEROISM.

To be always disposed to contribute to the relief of the *necessitous*; freely and cheerfully to communicate *ease, satisfaction, and pleasure* to others; are sure and certain characteristics of a *truly worthy heart, and beneficent soul*.—“Blessed are

“the

“ the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.—Love your enemies,
“ do good to them that hate you; that ye may be the children
“ of God, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the
“ good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust.—
“ The wisdom that is from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, and
“ easy to be intreated; full of mercy and good works.—Put on
“ therefore (as the elect of God, holy and beloved) bowels of
“ mercy, kindness, long-suffering, forgiving one another; and
“ above all things CHARITY, which is the bond of PER-
“ FECTNESS.”

Page 141.

卷之三

E R R A T U M.

Fab. xix. p. 67, l. 1: read to whence you came

FABLES IN VERSE.

F A B L E I.

The OLD-MAN, his Son, and Ass.

To all AUTHORS, EDITORS, and COMPILERS OF
BOOKS, &c.

THREE liv'd of yore an ancient fire,
Th' applause of all men (his desire)
By ev'ry act he strove to gain ;
But found, alas ! he strove in vain.
—Still barr'd the joys of rustic life,
By neighb'ring quarrels, jars and strife :
And, Oh ! what happineſſ to him !
To live in ev'ry one's esteem :

B

But

2 FABLES IN VERSE.

. But woes on ev'ry creature fall,
And on th' impatient most of all.
Conceiving he was much abus'd,
He one day with himself thus mus'd :
— ‘ Maugre I live unhappy here ;
‘ Who knows but, if I liv'd elsewhere,
‘ An alteration in my state
‘ Might alter the decrees of fate ;
‘ And, in despite of sorrows past,
‘ Confirm me happy at the last :
‘ I know my care among mankind
‘ Must be to shift with every wind ;
‘ I ought to do what many say ;
‘ ’Twill be my pleasure to obey ;
‘ And, cheerful, what I can procure,
‘ Enjoy from henceforth—or endure.’
This said, he straight his son address'd,
(His family's one half, and best)
And his dear asfs that fed on chaff,
(His fam'ly's worst and other half :)
‘ My friends, by me it is decreed
‘ We seek our fortunes with all speed ;
‘ Prepare this hour, 'tis my command,
‘ For my departure is at hand :—

‘ You

FABLES IN VERSE. 3

‘ You, my dear son, I mean to lead,
‘ For thou art young---too young indeed:
‘ And thee to drive; so from thy bed
‘ Of turf arise---stir up poor ned.—
So said, he led his son a while,
And drove his ass on many a mile;
—Anon, as thro’ the world they pass’d,
“ What ” says the world, amaz’d! aghast!
“ Sure two such fools were never seen
“ As trudge along near yonder green;
“ Drive a leer ass (why ’tis a fin!)
“ And trudge themselves thro’ thick and
thin.”

With that they both the beast bestrid,
(The fire and son) and on they rid;
And ne’er had been with riding maim’d,
But thus the world again exclam’d:—
“ How barb’rous is the English nation,
“ All over, to the brute creation!—
“ The truth whereof is now made good,
“ By yon two tyrants in the road!”
From these reflections he descry’d
That one must walk, and t’other ride;

4 FABLES IN VERSE.

And, 'lighting from the beast with speed,
On ass-back let his son proceed:

—But as they thus pass'd on;—the world
Again their shrew'd reflections hurl'd;

“ How weak must that old dotard be,

“ Who, pleas'd, his youthful son can see

“ Triumphant ride—whilst he himself

“ Slaves it on foot—besotted elf!”

Resolv'd once more to change the scene

To please mankind—he mounts again;

And bids his son, without delay,

On foot to make the best of's way:

Whereat the cens'ring world enrag'd,

With taunts like these the fire engag'd:

“ Think'ſt thou, vile wretch, that God will
have

“ Mercy for thee beyond the grave

“ For all thy sins, when none you shew

“ To one who ne'er offended you!

“ Nay more; your son, a charming boy,

“ Whose fight should fill with gushing joy

“ Thy anxious eye;—for shame alight,

“ For nature can't endure the fight.”

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 5

The fire, at length, convinc'd 'twas vain
To strive true happiness t' attain
On earth :---breaks forth---‘ Oh! how absurd
‘ To place in *every one's good word*
‘ *Our chiefest good.*---Go, change thy plan,
‘ And mend thy maxims, foolish man:
‘ Be *honest* and *industrious* still ;—
‘ And let the world say, *what they will.*’

F A B L E II.

The PINE and WILLOW.

TOO oft 'tis found to be the case,
That those whom fortune deigns to
grace,
Grow proud of their exalted station,
And view the poor with indignation ;
Not thinking what *may* come to all,
The low may rise, the high may fall.

A pine, aloft was seen to rise,
As tho' it aim'd to reach the skies ;

A

6 FABLES IN VERSE.

A willow was beheld below,
Near where the murmur'ring streamlets flow;
There, from the pine, by zephyr's aid,
These words (important) were convey'd.
---What vast of honours all are mine,
What tree can equal me, the pine?---
The highest hill I still adorn,
And rise to view the blushing morn:
No doubt but every one who fees,
Must stile the Pine the *Lord of trees*;
To see my lofty honours spread
That humble Willow bows his head,
And seems to say, with modest grace,
“ I wish that I was in your place;”---
How vain the vaunt---the winds grew loud,
The thunder rattled in the cloud,
The light'ning darted thro' the void,
And soon his honours were destroy'd;
With all his loftiness and pride,
He stretches by the Willow's side;
And as expiring there he lay,
In his last groans was heard to say,
‘ Fool that I was to cast the glance
• Of ill tim'd pride and arrogance

‘ On

FABLES IN VERSE. 7

' On the poor tree that humbly grew,
' Nor none of my ambition knew!
' Too late I find the *vainly great*
' May soon be made the sport of fate;
' And tho' they seem to tow'r th' higher,
' The greater danger may be nigher.'---

These words the Willow heard with pain:

He cast a look, not *proud, or vain*,
And cried, " alas! unhappy Pine,
" I never wish'd thy station mine;
" For as the storm grew loud and louder,
" I *envied not* that you were *prouder*;
" But rather pity'd your *ambition*,
" And was *content in my condition*:
" For, bending to the furious blast,
" I safe remain now all is past.--
" Had'st thou but known what sudden fate
" Too often does attend the great,
" Thou would'st have rather wish'd to be
" An humble, simple, willow tree:
" Thy loftiness was thy undoing;
" Me, humbleness preserv'd from ruin."---

Humility

8 FABLES IN VERSE.

*Humility in ev'ry station
Best shews a virtuous inclination ;
And where we can contentment find,
No fears or cares disturb the mind :
While pride, with greatness, insecure,
The frowns of fortune must endure ;
And, after all the strut of grandeur,
Shall sink as objects fit for slander.
Let those who now in splendor shine
Remember the ill-fated pine.*

F A B L E III.

The WOOD-LARK and LINNET; or the GILDED CAGE.

THE sun in all its splendor shone,
The spring return'd, the winter gone,
The flow'rets bloom'd along the ground,
The fawns and lambkins skip and bound,
The feather'd race their songs prepare,
And nature all was debonair.---

---Aloft

FABLES IN VERSE. 9

Aloft before a palace gate,
With regal dignity and state,
Parading in a gilded cage,
A captive linnet trod the stage:
Yet oft he fwell'd his little throat,
And warbled out a tuneful note;
But in divinest extacy
He sung in vain of liberty.

How oft appearances abuse,
And grandeur envy still pursues:---
We fancy in the royal dome
As happy, as a splendid home;
Wish all the gaudiness our own,
Nor think what cares within are known.

A wood-lark, always blythe and free,
In ever wish'd-for liberty,
By chance th' imprison'd linnet fees,
And fancies all *content* and *ease*;
Such pomp and state his mind engage,
He envies much the gilded cage.---

Approaching nearer, thus he cry'd,
‘ How bless'd 'bove all the birds beside!
‘ Trouble or care you can have none,
‘ Nor dread the fowler's net or gun;

10 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ No anxious care to form the nest,
‘ No dangers can your mind molest;
‘ Abroad you never need to roam,
‘ To bring the little morsel home ;
‘ Your trough still swells with heaps of grain,
‘ Without one jot of toil or pain ;
‘ No tyrant hawk pursues your flight,
‘ But all is calmness and delight.’

“ Ah me!” the captive songster said,
(While pensive hung his downy head)
“ In vain you fancy joy in me,
“ From all this gilded finery :---
---“ The dangers which you say you share,
“ Alas! are nothing to my care;
“ Here doom’d, I must for ever be
“ A slave, nor know sweet *liberty*:
“ Tho’ from the neighb’ring woods resound,
“ That soul-delighting happy sound.
“ Let dangers lengthen every way,
“ Destructive guns their force display;
“ Around the artful net be spread;
“ These strike me not with half the dread

‘ As

FABLES IN VERSE. II

“ As here in gilded pomp to shine,
“ With not one hour of freedom mine.
“ Haste to thy mates, and learn from me
“ That *nought is bliss but liberty.*”

Those ills frail mortals here endure,
So long are capable of cure,
As they of *freedom* may be sure:
But that deny'd, embitters all,
Turns every thing we taste to gall.

F A B L E IV.

The NIGHTINGALE and GLOW-WORM.

THE prudent nymph, whose cheeks
disclose
The lilly and the blushing rose,
From public view her charms will skreen,
And rarely in the croud be seen;
This simple truth shall keep her wise,
“ The fairest fruits attract the flies”.

12 FABLES IN VERSE.

One night, a glow-worm, proud and vain,
Contemplating her glitt'ring train,
Cry'd, ‘ sure there never was in nature
‘ So elegant, so fine a creature :---
‘ All other insects, that I see,
‘ The frugal ant, th' industrious bee,
‘ Or silk-worm, with contempt I view ;
‘ With all that low mechanic crew
‘ Of creatures, who their lives employ
‘ In busines, enemy to joy.---
‘ Mean, vulgar herd ! ye are my scorn,
‘ For grandeur only I was born ;
‘ Or else am sprung from race divine,
‘ And plac'd on earth to live and shine.
‘ Those lights, that sparkle so on high,
‘ Are but the glow-worms of the sky,
‘ And kings on earth their gems admire,
‘ Because they imitate my fire.’---
She spoke---Attentive on a spray,
A nightingale forbore his lay ;
He saw the shining morsel near,
And flew, directed by the glare;
---A while he gaz'd with sober look,
And thus the trembling prey bespoke:

“ Deluded

FABLES IN VERSE. 13

“ Deluded fool, with pride elate,
“ Know, ’tis thy beauty brings thy fate ;
“ Less dazzling, long thou might’st have lain
“ Unheeded, on the velvet plain ;
“ Thy boasted splendor shows me meat,”
So said,---He straight the glow-worm eat.

Pride, soon or late, degraded mourns ;
Beauty may wreck whom she adorns.

F A B L E V.

The Drop of Water.

WHEN fortune’s frowns and wordly care
Bid sons of sadness tempt despair ;
To wake the hopeless into sense,
And lift their eyes to providence ;
A simple fable I produce,
Which, heeded well, may be of use.

Forth from the clouds (as stories tell)
A single drop of water fell,

The

14 FABLES IN VERSE.

The boundless ocean it receives,
Where flowing, thus it murmur'ring grieves.

“ Alas! how wretched is my fate,
“ How small am I! the sea how great!
“ Quite undistinguish'd is my lot,
“ And what I was is now forgot :
“ In this abyss of waters I
“ Un-notic'd must for ever lie ;
“ Or, when the foaming billows roar,
“ Be dash'd against the rocks, or shore :
“ Alas! how terrible my fate:
“ How little I ! the sea how great!”
As thus it griev'd with piteous moan,
And ev'n in anguish seem'd to groan,
An oyster, kindly, into 's shell
Receiv'd the drop, (just as it fell,)
Then clos'd again.—now wonders see !
Produc'd by heav'n and fate's decree !

Years roll'd away while thus confin'd
Within the oyster's harden'd rind ;
When, mark,—superior to it's pride,
By nature's skill 'tis petrified,
It's liquid state no more it wears,
But now an orient pearl appears.

Soon

FABLES IN VERSE. 15

Soon after was this oyster caught:
The pearl exceeds whate'er was thought;
'Tis worn in an imperial crown,
By Persia's monarch on his throne;
Where all the rest it far outshines,
Nor longer at it's lot repines;---
But owns, " that heav'n in all is just,
" That providence claims all our trust;
" That God (if rightly understood)
" Acts always wisely, always good;
" And that in every thing 'tis fit
" We should to his behests submit."

In life, tho' fortune frowns a while,
With patience wait, again she'll smile;
Tho' undistinguish'd in this scene,
You pass as tho' you'd never been,
A while;—tho' mean and thread-bare coat
Should set you down of little note;
Yet ne'er lament, a diff'rent fate
May soon advance you—make you great;
May raise you up from low degree,
To live in bless'd prosperity:

Think

16 FABLES IN VERSE.

Think on the metamorphos'd drop,
And all your discontents will stop.

F A B L E VI.

The Bees and Drones.

THOSE who in idle ways proceed,
Are bad companions, 'tis agreed;
And those of an industrious mind,
To herd with such are not inclin'd:
From them no real good can flow,
Who *only reap what others sow*:
From idleness all evil springs,
And so each moral author sings:
Hence thieves commence, and rapine thrives,
Hence loss of property and lives.

—'Gainst such the lawgivers of old,
Severest punishments uphold;
As public shame, and death, and all
Which should on such delinquents fall:
Such ills to shun, and good pursue;
Attend the fable now in view.

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 17

The bees, a wise industrious race,
(Of insects still the first in place)
By nature taught, a realm compose,
Where each his separate office knows ;
The king, supreme in all command,
Above all others takes the hand ;
Directs his subjects where to roam,
And how to build the curious comb ;
There keeps his court ;—while others wait,
Obsequious, at the op'ning gate :
Order and harmony prevail,
For justice holds aloft her scale.

Thus long the state maintain'd its sway,
Each subject happy to obey ;
And ev'ry prospect seem'd to show
It likely to continue so.

But oft disasters, innovations,
Attend the best of regulations.
The bees, who roam'd from morn to night,
Collecting honey with delight ;
From flow'r to flow'r, thro' ev'ry field,
Importing all the sweets they yield ;

D

From

18 FABLES IN VERSE.

From industry still hop'd to thrive,
Yet often found a plunder'd hive.

Surpriz'd which way their store could go,
(For yet the thief they did not know)
They call'd a council ;---held debate ;---
The king was there in all his state !
From circumstances seeming plain ;
They judg'd (nor was their judgment vain)
The thieves among themselves must be ;
And constables were set to see :
These soon found out the subtle foe ;
A gang of drones---laid hid below ;
Who, when abroad the others flew,
Came forth---the best of honey drew ;
And, soon as fill'd with what they stole,
Again return'd into their hole :

Discovery made,---straightway the king
His orders issued, forth to bring
The pilf'ring race.--They're dragg'd to light;
With guilt and shame astonish'd quite,
Before a dread tribunal stand,
And heard aloud this strict command ;
---“ That ev'ry drone, whipt out, shou'd fly,
“ And never more the hive come nigh :

“ That

FABLES IN VERSE. 19

“ That hatred, ridicule, and shame,
“ Should ever stigmatize each name :
“ That none should taste their luscious fare,
“ But who to get it had a share.”

The sentence was most justly due,
And *human drones* deserve it too.

F A B L E VII.

The Fatal Inquisitor.

THO' down the bed where *Miro* lay,
He slept not till the dawn of day ;
For who could hope a moment's rest,
While thoughts like these perplex'd the
breast ?

“ Knowledge, conceal'd beyond the sky,
“ Ah ! what can dim-ey'd man descry ?
“ Life's good or ill, till felt, unknown ;
“ To-morrow's is to-morrow's own !
“ My mortal hour the next may be,
“ Or heav'n may hoary age decree.

20 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ My moments pass!—When past, I know
“ If fraught with happiness or woe:
“ But tardy knowledge comes too late,
“ And unprepar'd we meet our fate,
“ Ah! why, if heav'n is wise and kind,
“ Thus hoodwink'd man's immortal mind!
“ Why prescience jealously deny'd,
“ Of life alone the guard and guide!
“ *Man born to woe, as sparks ascend,*
“ The means of bliss heav'n will not lend.”
Here slumber seal'd his weary'd eyes;
A dream ensu'd to make him wise.
(But all her sons, like *Eve*, shall know,
Knowledge, that heav'n forbids, is woe,) An angel thus bespoke him.—‘ Friend,
‘ I come at once thy doubts to end:
‘ Full to thy view I'll make appear
‘ The fate of thy ensuing year.’
He ceas'd:—and from the doubter's eyes
Fell scales;—a scene began to rise;
One raving in a fever lay:
Shriek'd! and expir'd—turn'd cold as clay.
Another worn, to skin and bone,
Deep, and more deep, fetch'd many a groan:
And

FABLES IN VERSE. 21

And now the shadow gasp'd for breath;
And now was agoniz'd in death!

“ Whose she, that *fever* robb'd of life?”
The angel answer'd, ‘ ‘twas *your wife.*’

“ The man *consumption* ended, who?”
Again the angel answer'd, ‘ *you.*’

That dreadful word like thunder broke;
The dreamer startled and awoke.

“ What can this shocking dream portend!

“ Two deaths before the year shall end!

“ *Mira's* the first:---nor her's alone:

“ As much it ascertain'd *my own.*

“ *Your wife, and you!* this tingling ear

“ Still rings as were the angel here.

“ But what's a dream? nay, some rehearse

“ It just denotes its own reverse:

“ Of mine shall I presume the same?

“ Impossible! from *heav'n* it came:

“ Came to correct this wrangling heart;

“ And what but *truth* can *heav'n* impart?

“ Must I then die?---Is death so near?

“ Good *heav'n* accept this gushing tear:

“ To ev'ry crime thy grace extend,

“ And let that death my sorrows end.

“ But

22 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ But how to break it to my fair :
“ For this dread secret she must share.
“ Warn’d, she’ll prepare herself to die,
“ And shine a brighter saint on high.”

The dream was told :---how struck the dame :
High bounds her pulse—her blood’s on
flame.

See her in bed : she pants ! she turns !
She raves ! how fell the fever burns !
She’s gone ! and when her heart-strings broke,
Miro felt more than half the stroke.
By forethought of that dreadful day,
How much was *Miro* worn away ;
But quite to lose so fond a wife,
It shrunk him to *a shade of life*.
E'en hope, the *waster's* constant friend,
That scarce deserts him at his end,
Hope flies this piner’s heart : nor dare
That heart importune heav’n to spare :
But certain that his instant doom’s decreed ;
He meets grim death half way, and dies in-
deed.

M O R A L.

FABLES IN VERSE. 23

M O R A L.

Man, at his peril thro' the future pries:
What *best were bid* heav'n *bides* from human eyes.
Hence there are *seasons* to be *purely gay* ;
And e'en misfortunes have their *proper day*.
Hence hope, that helps life's heaviest loads to bear;
Hence all the humble confidence of *pray'r*.
Hence *resignation* calms the pious breast,
And all that heav'n permits man construes *best*.

F A B L E VIII.

The PAINTED LADY.

MORTALS, to change by nature prone,
Are ne'er contented with their own :
Still something new our fancy leads,
And something still our bliss impedes :
If we are blest with *sense* and *health*,
We aim at *beauty*, *pow'r*, or *wealth* ;
Until, (and sure we're rightly paid)
We quit a *substance* for a *shade*.
On this why need I longer dwell?
To prove it true, a tale I'll tell.

Chloe

24 FABLES IN VERSE.

Chloe was blest with noble parts,
Was fair enough to win men's hearts ;
Her lively wit was much admir'd ;
Her words with wonder most inspir'd :
Yet, not contented in this light,
She would be thought a beauty quite.

To compass this, paints are prepar'd,
No time is lost, no labour spar'd ;
She's plaister'd o'er with red and white,
Till ev'ry pimple's out of sight :
The mole no mortal now could spy,
Vermilion hides it from the eye ;
And holes, as if they'd never been,
Are now no longer to be seen.

The work now done, th' enraptur'd lass
With great amazement holds the glass,
And thus she cries : " Gods ! can it be !
" Sure 'tis not *Chloe* that I see !
" How great the change ! how fair my face !
" No pimples now to cause disgrace ;
" They're vanish'd all ; fled quite away ;
" Sure this to me's a happy day :
" I now foresee, ay, very plain,
" The mighty conquests I shall gain.

" Of

FABLES IN VERSE. 25

“ Of lovers, where I’d two before,
“ I shall for certain have a score :
“ While with such beauteous charms I
 shine,
“ My *Strephon*’s heart shall e’er be mine.
“ No more shall *Sue* her conquests tell,
“ For I alone shall bear the bell :
“ No more with me shall *Flavia* vie,
“ Nor *Dapperwit* my charms defy.”

When thus she’d said, away she goes,
Perfumes her hair, puts on her clothes :
By clothes, I mean a birth-day suit ;
Resolv’d to kill, if all could do’t :
Then to the *Opra* hies apace,
Longing to shew her borrow’d grace ;
Her conduct and success while there,
Behoves my verse next to declare.

While in the garnish’d box she fits,
A thousand hopes her heart admits ;
That this may love, and loving die,
And that be smitten with an eye ;
That beaux, who coldly look’d before,
May gaze in love, and now adore.

26 FABLES IN VERSE.

Big with these thoughts, at all around
She glances casts, and fain would wound ;
To all her borrow'd charms displays,
And would attract a thousand ways :
But all in vain her wishes prove,
There's not a heart she fires with love ;
But all, her pleasing hopes defeat ;
All see the paint—despise the cheat.

Strephon, a comely sober youth,
Blest with good sense, adorn'd with truth,
Who'd long sincerely lov'd the fair,
Was then (unknown to *Chloe*) there.
Soon as he saw her borrow'd part,
Just indignation fir'd his heart ;
In great disdain he stole away,
And wrote these lines th' ensuing day ;
Which to the vainly painted maid,
He, by his servant, soon convey'd.
“ While in your native charms you shone,
“ I ne'er could call my heart my own ;
“ A moment's blis I never knew,
“ Unless I was engag'd with you :
“ But longer your's I can't remain ;
“ My captive heart I now regain :

“ For

FABLES IN VERSE. 27

“ For since with *borrow'd* charms you shine,
“ My heart no longer can be *thine.*

F A B L E IX.

SUCCESS and DISAPPOINTMENT.

YOUR every wish should fortune crown
With wealth, with honour, and re-
nown,

Let not thy bosom fwell with pride ;
The poor and humble ne'er deride.
'Tis not ordain'd for all alive
Like you to rise, like you to thrive ;
Yet soft humanity will teach
To treat the low with lenient speech ;
And not in haughty, surly tone,
To bid them from thy door——begone.

Perhaps you'll urge your own desert,
Your industry, your skill, your art ;
That fools and spendthrifts justly may
Expect in life a luckless day.

28 FABLES IN VERSE.

The observation may be true ;
But this is nothing still to you :
Should justice ev'ry where take place,
(Remember you're of human race !)
Tho' high advanc'd, you yet *may* fall ;
A change *may* happen to us *all*.
To bring the subject more to view,
My simple fable now pursue.

Two youths, in life set out together,
And took their route---no matter whither :
To *Fortune*, each his wish address'd,
Her favour, sure, would make them bless'd :
And each as diligently strove
By every means to win her love.

The one she heard :---she *rais'd him high*,
She *crown'd him with prosperity* :
Extensive acres call him *Lord*,
And peace and plenty crown his board :
Void of all care, free from distress ;
And he by all was call'd *Success*.

The other, tho' with care and pains
He toil'd all day and rack'd his brains,
Yet *fate had so ordain'd his lot*,
He not the least advantage got ;

But

FABLES IN VERSE. 29

But *Poverty*! a meagre shade,
Her tatter'd mantle o'er him laid ;
Derision follow'd where he came,
And *Disappointment* was his name.

Perplexing thoughts disturb his mind:
Resolv'd his former friend to find,
He seeks the spacious mansion out:
Relief was there—without a doubt.
Both friendly in their early years,
Alike their hopes, alike their fears,
He surely could expect no less :
When at the door—behold Success,
With haughty mein, forbidding air,
He view'd poor *Disappointment* there :
His name, he said, he did not know,
Or if he did, 'twas long ago ;
That time and things were alter'd quite,
So shut the door, and said—good night.

But Fortune shew'd her fickle will
Soon after this—the turn'd her wheel.

Success, alas ! can vaunt no more,
His all is gone, and he is---poor ;
While t'other is no longer croft,
Or in a sea of trouble tost ;

But

30 FABLES IN VERSE.

But rais'd on high to wealth and state,
Yet is not haughty, tho' he's great :
Rememb'rance of his former days
Appears in all he does or says ;
For well he knows, the self-same pow'r
Which *rais'd him up*, can sink him lower.

F A B L E X.

The FAIR INCONSTANT:

O R,

The LADY and LINNET.

A Hungry hawk, in quest of prey,
Wing'd wide, o'er fields and groves
his way ;
Whence ev'ry bird that haunts the glade,
Or warbles in the rural shade,
Dispers'd, in wild disorder flies
Before the tyrant of the skies.

A Linnet

FABLES IN VERSE. 31

A *Linnet*, feebler than the rest,
With weary wings and panting breast ;
Reach'd *Sylvia's* window in despair,
And flutt'ring, crav'd protection there.

Compassion touch'd the fair one's mind :
(For female hearts are *sometimes* kind)
Straight up the gliding fash she threw,
And in the drooping stranger flew :
There, with the utmost tenderness,
The nymph revives her fainting guest :
Then (danger o'er and all serene)
Restores him to his fields again.

What *wond'rous joy !* what *grateful love !*
Inspir'd the wand'rer of the grove :
In unexpected life elate,
When now he recollects his fate,
And sets the friendly fair in view,
Who gave him life and freedom too.
For *gratitude*, to courts unknown,
And *unreturn'd by man alone !*
Wide thro' the wing'd creation reigns,
And dwells amidst the humble plains ;
In every verdant field and shade
The just, the generous debt is paid !

Back

32 FABLES IN VERSE.

Back from the Sylvan scene he hies ;
To thank his dear deliv'rer flies ;
And at her window pour'd her praise,
With grateful heart, in tuneful lays.
There *Lin* his morning visit makes,
And there his ev'ning stand he takes ;
There oft the noon-tide hour prolongs,
Still chaunting forth his soul in songs.

His tender strains attention drew,
And *Sylvia* soon the warbler knew :
She uses every charm to win,
And draw the wild musician in :
He enters, fearless of a snare,
For how should fraud inhabit there ?
And now, by frequent visits free,
At first he perches on her knee ;
Then, grown by long acquaintance bolder,
Familiarly ascends her shoulder ;
And, wholly now devoid of fear,
Plays with the pendant in her ear ;
All o'er her neck and bosom strays,
And, like a lover, learns to tease ;
Pecks on her hand, and fondly sips
Delicious nectar from her lips.

Thrice

FABLES IN VERSE. 33

Thrice happy bird ! how wert thou
blefs'd,
Of such superior love possess'd ;
Could'st thou but make the tenure sure,
And those unrivall'd hours endure :
But love, a light fantastic thing,
Like thee, is often on the wing ;
And sacred friendship oft a jest,
When center'd in a female breast.

Thus *Lin* the fleeting moments past
In raptures too refin'd to last ;
For, as his constant court he paid,
Some envious songsters of the shade
Observe'd his motions to and fro ;
(For merit's ne'er without a foe)
They mark'd the transports of his eye,
His sprightly air and glossy dye,
And all found out, before 'twas night,
What gave the vagrant such delight.

These straight to visit *Sylvia* throng,
Nor for admittance waited long ;
The nymph (whom ev'ry charm attends)
Receives her new aërial friends ;

F

With

34 FABLES IN VERSE.

With crumbled cake, and choicest seeds,
Her plamy guests the fair one feeds ;
Did all that kindness could inspire,
To draw her coy acquaintance nigh her.
And *Linny* now returns, to pay
The due devotions of the day ;
When, to his wond'ring eyes arose
A num'rous circle of his foes :
Grief touch'd his soul to see them there ;
But putting on an easy air,
He took a place among the rest,
And sat an undistinguish'd guest.

Alas ! How soon can time destroy
The surest pledge of earthly joy ;
A fav'rite's flatt'ring hopes defeat,
And tumble tyrants from their seat :
For time, indulgent but to few,
Deposes *Kings* and *Linnets* too.

He, who was once the nymph's delight,
Sits now neglected in her sight ;
In vain to charm her ear he tries ;
New forms engage her ears and eyes :
The *Goldfinch* shews his gaudy coat,
And all are ravish'd with his note ;

While

FABLES IN VERSE. 35

While none attends to *Linny's* strain,
For, ah ! poor *Linny's plumes were plain.*

And now (the mournful warbler flown,
The nymph and friendly bow'r their own)
O'er all reserve their spleen prevails,
And ev'ry tongue in concert rails :
All wonder'd what her eyes could see
In such a worthless thing as he,
Who still pursues his private ends,
Ungrateful to his kindest friends :
The present instance sure might show him :
Alas ! how little did she know him.

Some then affirm'd he us'd vile arts,
Whereby to vanquish female hearts ;
Asserted that he still made love,
And kept a miss in ev'ry grove ;
Would trifle with the meanest fowl,
Nay, offer courtship to an *Owl!*

Scandal, tho' pointed in the dark,
Is seldom known to miss it's mark ;
As few will interrupt it's aim ;
Regardless of another's fame.
Ev'n they by whom we once were lov'd,
And faithful, many years approv'd,

36 FABLES IN VERSE.

When spleen and envy rail aloud,
Are often carry'd with the crowd ;
Preferring, rather than contend,
To sacrifice their nearest friend.

Thus *Sylvia* yielded to the birds ;
Too complaisant to doubt their words ;
Nor thought that creatures so polite,
Could deal in calumny and spite.
The injur'd *Linnet*, with their leaves,
For decency she still receives ;
Who, tho' he sees his foes careft,
Like some fond lover, hopes the best ;
And doubts his own discerning eyes :
But, ah ! how obvious is disguise ?
At length, of hope itself bereft,
(For now no friendly look was left,
And ev'ry mark of fondness fled)
He hung his wings, and droop'd his head.

“ And am I then resign'd,” he says,
“ To such ungen'rous foes as these ?
“ By these defrauded of my blifs !
“ Is *Sylvia's* kindness come to this ?
“ Yet ah ! my tongue, forbear to blame
“ That much-lov'd, ever-honour'd name :

“ This

FABLES IN VERSE. 37

“ This heart, howe'er misus'd at laſt,
“ Muſt own unnumber'd favors paſt;
“ And ſhall, tho' ne'er to meet again,
“ The dear rememb'rance ſtill retain.”

This ſaid—He to the window flew,
There ſat, and ſung his *laſt* adieu:
—Since which, fair *Sylvia's* new-made
friends

Appear to act for *ſelfiſh* ends:
For ev'ry *favour'd* bird (they ſay)
Makes with her but a tranſient ſtay;
Then ſeeks his wonted grove or plain,
And never more returns again.

F A B L E XI.

I N S U L T E D P O V E R T Y;

O R,

The C A S E i s A L T E R ' D.

HODGE held a farm, and ſmil'd
content,
While ev'ry year cou'd pay it's rent;
But

38 FABLES IN VERSE.

But if he ran the least behind,
Vexation stung his anxious mind :
For not an hour would *Landlord* stay,
But seize the very quarter day.
That cheap the market ; — scant the grain ;
'Tho' urg'd with truth, was urg'd in vain :
The same to him, if false, or true ;
For rent must come when rent was due.
Yet that same *Landlord's* cows and steeds
Broke *Hodge's* fences, cropt his meads ;
In hunting that same *Landlord's* hounds,
See ! how they spread his new-fown grounds ;
Dog, horse, and man, alike o'er joy'd,
While half the rising crop 's destroy'd ;
Yet tamely was the loss sustain'd ;
'Tis said the suff'rer *once* complain'd :
The *Squire* laugh'd loudly as he spoke,
And paid the bumpkin with a joke :
But luckless still poor *Hodge's* fate :
His worship's Bull has forc'd a gate,
And gor'd his cow — the last and best ;
By sickness he had lost the rest.
Hodge felt at heart resentment strong :
The heart *will* feel that suffers long :

A thought

FABLES IN VERSE. 39

A thought that instant took his head,
And thus, within himself, he said :
‘ If *Hodge*, for once, don’t fling the squire,
‘ The village post him for a liar.’
He said :—Across his shoulder throws
His fork, and to his *landlord* goes.
‘ I come, an’ please ye, to unfold
‘ What, soon or late, you *must* be told;
‘ My bull, (a creature tame till now)
‘ My bull has gor’d *your worship’s* cow.
‘ ’Tis known what shifts I make to live ;
‘ Perhaps your *honour* may forgive.’
“ Forgive !” the squire reply’d, and swore ;
“ Pray, cant to me *forgive*, no more :
“ The *law* my damage shall decide ;
“ And know that I’ll be satisfi’d.”
‘ Think, sir, I’m *poor* ;—*poor* as a rat.’
“ Think I’m a justice ;—think of that.”
Hodge bow’d again, and scratch’d his head,
And, recollecting, archly said,
‘ Sir, I’m so struck when here before ye,
‘ I fear I’ve blunder’d in my story :
‘ ’Fore George but I’ll not blunder now ;
‘ Your’s was the bull, sir; mine the cow.’

His

40 FABLES IN VERSE.

His *worship* found his rage subside,
And, with calm accent, thus reply'd: *quoth A.*
“ I'll think upon your case to-night;
“ But I perceive 'tis *alter'd* quite.”
Hodge shrugg'd, and made another bow,
‘ And please ye, who's the *justice now?*’

On the same case what diff'rent lights are thrown,
When thought *another's*, and when found *our own*.
The *rich* still born the *needy* to enslave:
This *case* will *alter* too, beyond the grave.

F A B L E XII.

P O V E R T Y R E W A R D E D;

O R,

The C A S E R E - A L T E R ' D.

W I T H temper that made *Cato* great,
Hodge bore, nor murmur'd at his fate.
Oft'

FABLES IN VERSE. 41

Oft, as at work, and oft in bed,
These were the thoughts that fill'd his head :
‘ My *landlord’s* fortune, how immense !
‘ His *thousands*, more than *Hodge’s* pence !
‘ Nor sorrow his, nor cause for sorrow :
‘ He lives to-day, nor dreads to-morrow.
‘ Some are to sink, and some to thrive :
‘ Sure he’s the happiest man alive.’

But what friend *Hodge* affirms, we doubt :
Is bliss consistent with the gout ?

The *Justice*, tippling with the *Vicar*,
Is ev’ry night disguis’d in liquor.

If sober, not the gout so bad,
But then he *thinks*, and then is *mad*.

His thoughts, when cool, should *Hodge* be
told,

’Twould make him spurn that trifle---gold.
“ This *wealth*, for which the world caress,
“ How *vain*--how *impotent* to *bless*.
“ Without the pow’r to *sleep* or *eat*,
“ I’m *Justice*, *Squire*, and *wretch* compleat.
“ This foot’s intolerable pain
“ Has try’d a thousand drugs in vain ;

G

“ And

42 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ And what prescription can appease
“ This mind’s corroding, dire disease.
“ There’s *Hodge*—and yet he envies me :
“ O ! to be half so blest as he !
But scenes are shifting : fever ends
An uncle’s life : a farm descends
To *Hodge* : and now he ploughs no more
The land his *worship* leas’d before :
No crop destroy’d, no rent to pay ;
He lays up substance ev’ry day.
The *Justice*, on his prancing mare,
Attempts a gate---she throws him there :
There at the gate the *bull* came thro’
When *Hodge’s cow* he gor’d and flew :
From whence the whisp’ring neighbours
know
What caus’d this fatal overthrow.
The rosy vicar next came by,
And found him with a broken thigh.
’Tis set---in vain---it mortifies :
The squire before to-morrow dies.
His daughter’s call’d---an only child ;
A girl of parts, or had been spoil’d.

“ Daughter

FABLES IN VERSE. 43

“ Daughter I’m going : don’t repine ;
“ But lead *a better life than mine.*
“ Of all my crimes, none sting me more
“ Than injuries I’ve done the poor.
“ O ! promise me, before these friends,
“ To make that *injur’d Hodge* amends.”
At more with fault’ring tongue he try’d,
But fetch’d a dreadful groan and dy’d.
His corpse when decently interr’d,
The dying charge to mind curr’d :
“ Yes, I’ll fulfil this last request,”
(Quoth *Patsey*) “ but what method best ?
“ Suppose” (her heart began to say)
“ Suppose ’twere done the nuptial way ?
“ No doubt but I might flaunt for life,
“ A glitt’ring and a wretched wife.
“ Tho’ *Hodge* has little, I have store ;
“ What mod’rate pair wou’d wish for more ?
“ By bearing well his *adverse fate*,
“ His merit claims a *happier state.*
“ An *honest heart*, in nature’s vest,
“ Will make a rural virgin *blest.*
“ And *Hodge* is young, and tall, and straight ;
“ Of worthy blood, tho’ small estate :

G 2

“ His

44 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ His father lost, with just applause,
“ His fortune in his country’s cause.”
She said—and for the farmer sent,
And gave such hints of what she meant,
That ev’ry eve, for half a year,
He came with neither shame nor fear ;
He came,—but seldom went away
’Till midnight, or the dawn of day.
The morn was fix’d ; the knot was ty’d ;
Hodge to the *mansion* leads his bride ;
Succeeds the *Squire* in lands and store,
And clothes and feeds the neighb’ring
poor ;
And ’tis the universal cry,
Earth hold—and want him long the sky.

M O R A L.

If bliss for bliss still pass’d ; and woe for woe ;
The lot of *most* were equal e’en below.
Which state the best,—Reason may spring a doubt,
The *rich* with anguish, or the *poor* without ?
Or, if awhile, *apparent* wrongs obtain,
The virtuous mourners, and o’erjoy’d the vain,

Oft

FABLES IN VERSE. 45

Oft, ev'n on earth, the shifted scenes we view:
Vice meets its own, and worth enjoys its due.

F A B L E XIII.

The SPARROW, the HAWK,

AND

The BUTTERFLY.

IN days of yore, when birds could chat,
And judge aright of this or that;
And insects could, as well as man,
The merit of an action scan:
A Sparrow once, who sought a place
Of safety, from the Hawk in chace;
At length a snug retreat espies,
And, almost fainting, thither flies:
While there, he meditation cast
On danger that was scarcely past,
And in these sad, lamenting strains,
Of his precarious lot complains:

‘Unhappy

46 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ Unhappy me ! how hard the state
‘ In which I here am plac’d by fate ;
‘ Sure, scenes of danger still attend,
‘ Which way soe’er my flight I bend :
‘ But most cf all the *Hawk* I fear ;
‘ The *cannibal* who chas’d me here.
‘ ’Tis strange that there should live ‘mong
birds,
‘ (But vain, alas ! my plaintive words)
‘ A wretch, whose sole delight’s to kill,
‘ And blood of innocents to spill :
‘ Yet I, myself, confess I’ve been
‘ In some fort guilty of the sin ;
‘ What’s past I’m truely sorry for,
‘ And now this heinous crime abhor :
‘ Henceforth, for ever, I renounce
‘ The cruelties that pleas’d me once ;
‘ And here this solemn vow I make,
‘ (Which may I die whene’er I break)
‘ No more to taste of insect’s blood,
‘ But grain shall be my only food :
‘ Let savage *Hawks* still thirst for gore,
‘ But I’ll defile my beak no more.’

His

FABLES IN VERSE. 47

His protestation having done,
And thinking now the *Hawk* was gone,
He plum'd his wings, and peeping out
To see no danger lurk'd about,
Prepar'd again to take his flight,
His bosom beaming with delight:
As thus he stood, a *Butterfly*,
In life's gay pride came flutt'ring by;
The danger o'er, too-like mankind,
His good resolves he gave the wind;
All former fears were fled away;
He issued forth and seiz'd his prey:
The victim straight, with piteous cries,
In vain t'obtain his mercy tries :
‘ O spare, O spare my innocence,
‘ To you I never gave offence.’
The *Sparrow* thus, with cruel taunt:
“ Urge not to me your fruitless cant ;
“ Your being destin'd for my prey
“ Gives me a cause — you die straightway :
“ Therefore prepare for death — make haste ;
“ For I no longer time will waste.”
The *Butterfly*, with fear, once more
Did, trembling, for his life implore :

O mercy

48 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ O mercy show! or you may want
‘ That mercy, now you will not grant.’
“ Die,” cry’d the *Sparrow*, “ spare your
breath;”

Then with a gripe he seal’d his death.
That instant, lo! the *Hawk* return’d;
His breast with inward fury burn’d:
Who not far off the scene had stay’d,
And all the action well survey’d;
Darted like light’ning on his prey,
And bore him instantly away.

For mercy, quick the *Sparrow* cry’d,
Which, justly, thus the *Hawk* deny’d;
‘ How can’t thou, villain, hope to gain
‘ That mercy fu’d of thee in vain;
‘ This instant die:’—he said no more,
‘ But straight the wretch in pieces tore.’

Learn this *great maxim* to pursue;
TO DO AS YOU’D BE DONE UNTO.

FABLE

FABLES IN VERSE. 49

F A B L E XIV.

The Goose and Swans.

I Hate the face, however fair,
That carries an affected air;
The lisping tone, the shape constrain'd,
The studied look, the passion feign'd,
Are fopperies which only tend
To injure what they strive to mend.

With what superior grace inchants
The face which nature's pencil paints:
Where eyes unexercis'd in art,
Glow with the meaning of the heart;
Wher' freedom and good humour sit,
And easy gaiety and wit:
Though perfect beauty be not there,
The master lines, the finish'd air,
We catch from ev'ry look delight,
And grow enamour'd at the sight;
For beauty, tho' we all approve,
Excites our wonder more than love;

H

While

50 FABLES IN VERSE.

While the agreeable strikes sure,
And gives the wounds we cannot cure.

Why then, my *Amoret*, this care,
That forms you, in effect, less fair?
If nature on your cheek bestows
A bloom that emulates the rose;
Or, from some heav'nly image, drew
A form *Apelles* never knew;
Your ill-judg'd aid will you impart,
And spoil by meretricious art?
Or had you, nature's error, come
Abortive from your mother's womb,
Your forming care she still rejects,
Which only heightens her defects.
When such, of glitt'ring jewels proud,
Still press the foremost in the crowd,
The gaudy dress attracts the eye,
And magnifies deformity.
Nature may under-do her part,
But seldom wants the help of art;
Trust her, she is your surest friend,
Nor made your form for you to mend.

A *Goose*

FABLES IN VERSE. 51

A *Goose*, affected, empty, vain,
The shrillest of the cackling train,
With proud and elevated crest,
Precedence claim'd above the rest.
Says she, ‘ I laugh at human race,
‘ Who say *Geeſe* hobble in their pace;
‘ Look here!—The fland'rous lie detect;
‘ Not haughty man is so erect.
‘ That *Peacock* yonder: Lord, how vain
‘ The creature's of his gaudy train;
‘ If both were stripp'd, I'd pawn my word
‘ A *Goose* would be the finer bird:
‘ Nature, to hide her own defects,
‘ Her bungled work with fin'ry decks:
‘ Were *Geeſe* set off with half that show,
‘ Would men admire the *Peacock*?—No.’

Thus vaunting, cross the mead the stalks,
The cackling breed attend her walks;
The sun shot down his noon-tide beams;
The *Swans* were sporting in the streams;
Their snowy plumes, and stately pride,
Provok'd her spleen:—‘ Why there,’ she cry'd,
‘ Again, what arrogance we see;
‘ Those creatures, how they mimic *me*:

52 FABLES IN VERSE.

• Shall ev'ry fowl the water skim,
• Because we *Geese* are known to swim?
• Humility they soon shall learn,
• And their own emptiness discern?

So saying, with extended wings,
Lightly upon the wave she springs;
Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
And the *Swan's* stately crest assumes.

Contempt and *mock'ry* straight ensu'd,
And bursts of *laughter* shook the flood.

A *Swan*, superior to the rest,
Sprung forth, and thus the *fool* address'd:

“ Conceited thing, elate with pride,
“ Thy affectation all deride:
“ These airs thy *awkwardness* impart,
“ And show us plainly what thou art.
“ Among thy equals of the flock
“ Thou hast escap'd the public mock,
“ And, as thy parts to good conduce,
“ Been deem'd an honest *bobbling Goose*.”

Learn hence to study wisdom's rules;
Know fopp'ry is the pride of fools:

And

FABLES IN VERSE. 53

And striving nature to conceal,
You only her defects reveal.

F A B L E XV.

The FOREST and the OCEAN.

II. Esdras, chap iv. verse 12 to 23.

LE T all your wishes here below,
Their just and proper limits know:
Would you possess a tranquil mind,
Bear well the lot by heav'n assign'd.
Through anxious wishes to increase,
We often make our pleasures less,
And sometimes bring on deep distress.

Look thro' the world, you will not find,
In all the hist'ry of mankind,
A longer train of evils flow
From any source of human woe,
Than spring from envious discontent.
(A vice, alas! too prevalent:)

All

54 FABLES IN VERSE.

All in the busy strife engage
To push each other off the stage ;
The *Courtier* wants a *Statesman's* place ;
And *Delia* sighs for *Chloe's* face ;
One lawyer would supplant another ;
And one divine his rival brother ;
Authors contend to get a name ,
And still one envies t'other's fame .
Oft the too-curious scholar tries
To find out hidden mysteries ;
And vainly hopes to have reveal'd
What heav'n , in wisdom , hath conceal'd :
But all the eager strife is vain
Such fruitless wishes to obtain .

The following fable was design'd
To teach this lesson to mankind ;
To curb our childish wishes here ,
And keep within our proper sphere .

A pious sage , in former days ,
(As venerable record says)
Was curiously intent to know
Secrets forbid to man below ;

From

FABLES IN VERSE. 55

From heav'n an angel straight was sent
To chide the prophet's discontent :
URIEL came, and, to unfold
The will of heav'n, this fable told.

Upon a plain, which once I view'd,
A proud and stately forest stood,
Whose tow'ring trees expanded wide
The spreading branch on ev'ry side,
Long pin'd to wave its sov'reign wand,
Over the sea as well as land :
At length such envy fill'd the plain,
The *Woods* conspire against the *Main* ;
In hopes to gain a larger sway,
And make the *Deep* itself obey.

Shall we contented here remain,
To fade and wither on the plain ;
Within these humble limits keep,
And see the proud imperious *Deep*,
With all its swelling billows, roll
On ev'ry side, without controul ?
Rather than yield to such disgrace,
We'll make the *Waters* quit their place ;
Affuage their fury, stop their course,
By must'ring our superior force ;

At

56 FABLES IN VERSE.

At our approach the boist'rous *Sea*
Will cease to roar, the waves will flee;
Let us go down, and never fear,
We'll make us larger *Forests* there.

To try the project they agree,
(Nor was there one dissenting *Tree*)
But, lo! a dire catastrophe !

The *Woods*, to sudden ruin doom'd,
Are by the raging fire consum'd ;
Vain their ambitious schemes are found,
Their boughs are levell'd with the ground ;
The senseless trunks, to fuel turn'd,
Are with resistless fury burn'd ;
Soon to a heap of ruins brought ;
And all their *fancied glory*, — nought.
Reduc'd to ashes, they lament,
Too-late, their *fatal discontent*.

The *Ocean* too, with envy fraught,
Cherish'd the same ambitious thought ;
Wishing to fill a larger space,
And occupy the *Forest's place*.

The *Floods* consult, and soon agree
To make the lofty *Forest* flee
Before the mighty raging *Sea* ;

That

FABLES IN VERSE. 57

That farther still it's waves might spread,
And make a more capacious bed.
But, ah! how vain th' aspiring thought,
The envious project came to nought;
The sands against the *floods* arose,
Their furious efforts to oppose:
“ Think not, vain *Water*, to exceed
“ The bounds which nature hath decree'd;
“ Thy place is fix'd, and destin'd so:
“ Thus far,—no farther shalt thou go”.
Thus, nor the *Forest*, nor the *Main*,
Could their ambitious ends obtain.

The sage must now pronounce with heed,
Whether in folly did exceed,
The *Sea* that would the *Trees* displace,
Or *Trees* which claim'd the *Water's* space?
At length, when he decision made,
He rightly censur'd *both*, and said;
For senseless arrogance I blame
The *Forest*;—and the *Sea* the same;
Who with ambitious hopes, and vain,
Sought to enlarge their own domain:

I

Like

58 FABLES IN VERSE.

Like theirs the fate of all who try
To change their fixed destiny.
URIEL own'd, with due applause,
The *Prophet's* verdict in the cause
Was just:—and thence this maxim drew,
That mortals with content should view
The laws wise nature hath design'd
In virtuous harmony to bind
The various orders of mankind.

“ Then think not thou, presumptuous man,
“ The ways of providence to scan ;
“ Thy just and proper limits know,
“ Search not the hidden paths of woe;
“ Nor of thy ignorance complain,
“ When knowledge would but heighten
 pain ;
“ With nature's gift be thou content ;
“ Nor let thy days be idly spent
 In wishes to enlarge the sphere
“ Which heav'n has destin'd for thee here.”
This fable (which became so well
A heav'ly messenger to tell)

May

FABLES IN VERSE. 59

May teach mankind, both small and great,
To be contented in their state.
This lesson, rightly understood,
Would make men virtuous, wise and good.
Hence each may learn the happy art,
To act with proper care his part;
On earth to heav'nly wisdom rise,
And here be fitted for the skies.

F A B L E XVI.

The Cock and the Doves.

IF marriage law, that censur'd band,
The *Priest* or *Politician* plann'd,
I'll not enquire---but trust to show,
Did thoughtless men *their int'rest* know,
Without that law's compulsive force,
They'd take *one faithful fair* of course.

Say, blooming god of chaste desire,
On whom descends thy sacred fire?
O! teach my pen, with skill divine,
To draw the nice dividing line

60 FABLES IN VERSE.

Between thy gen'rous social flame,
And that which basely steals it's name.
Thy self unknown, unknown thy bliss,
To him who ruins with a kiss ;
Thy joy, from joy imparted flows,
Far from his heart who scatters woes ;
Whose love is hate in deep disguise ;
Whose bliss, what none but fools can prize.

In farmer's yard, one summer's day,
A pair of Doves, like nature gay,
Sat bill to bill :—with scornful eye,
And haughty port, *a Cock* went by ;
He went,---but soon return'd again,
And *twenty Hens* compos'd his train.
He crow'd, when near the *Doves* he drew,
And rang'd his females full in view ;
The *Doves*, of all regardless still,
Their attitude was bill to bill :
The *Cock*, impatient of the sight,
With humbled vanity and spight,
Thus taunting cry'd : ‘ methinks all day
Two faithful *Doves* can bill and play ;

‘ If

FABLES IN VERSE. 61

‘ If blest indeed, as ye pretend,
‘ Your blifs is vast, and without end;
‘ But I’m convinc’d ’tis all *pretence*;
‘ Can *one* to *one* such joys dispense?
‘ *I*, with a thousand beauties bless’d,
‘ Carefſing *all*, by *all* carefſ’d,
‘ Not *I* can boast more *bliss* than you,
‘ If these pretended joys are true.
‘ Hence with you---*ostentatious* loves,
‘ I hate all *hypocritic* Doves.’

With plumage varying in the sun,
Tom rais’d his head, and thus begun :

“ Abusive scorner, falsely vain!
“ Unmov’d your insult we sustain;
“ *Our mated* loves, endear’d by truth,
“ Survive the transient bloom of youth;
“ Not with the *kiss* our pleasure ends;
“ Not *lovers* only,—*Doves* are *friends*.
“ Thro’ life, but one our mutual aim,
“ Our fears, hopes, wishes, all the same;
“ Unlov’d, unloving, wretched bird!
“ With female rakes, a rake you herd:
“ When stung by jealousy or rage,
“ You bold and bloody combat wage,

“ Of

62 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ Of all your train, will one stand by
“ With panting breast, and wishful eye ?
“ You fall,---another fills your place;
“ Most welcome still the newest face.”
As meet, her place Tom’s female knew,
(In turtles prudent wives we view)
Silent she sat, with rapture high;
Full on *dear* Tom was fix’d her eye.

Yet as he finish’d, ‘tis confess,
She arch’d her neck, and rear’d her crest,
As proud to own the glorious cause,
And clapp’d her wings, and coo’d applause.
‘ Go !’ (cry’d the *Cock*) ‘ my soul *disdains*
‘ To make reply : go hug your chains :’
He scarce had ended, when behold
A rival comes, as young as bold :
His wanton wish his looks proclaim ;
With answ’ring looks the females came ;
His wish they crown’d ;---he crows aloud ;
His death the rivall’d boaster vow’d :
They fight, and dreadful scenes ensue ;
Their females, unconcern’d, withdrew.
This dies ;---our hero, maim’d, survives,
The scorn of all his twenty wives.

Opprobrious

FABLES IN VERSE. 63

Opprobrious now he hides his head;
None mourn the wounded, nor the dead:
New rakes, new loves, new broils succeed ;
They riot, envy, fight, and bleed.
With speechless joy the *Turtles* glow'd,
Their joys their meeting glances show'd ;
They bless'd the gracious pow'r above,
That each, at first, was form'd a Dove.

Let *others* take from *Cocks* their cue,
And range wide *nature's* common thro' ;
By *Doves* instructed, grant that *I*,
'True to my *one* may live and die.

'Till *love* bestows the blessings of his reign,
In varied beauty, bliss we seek in vain ;
But when he fills th' irradiated breast,
To *one we fix*, regardless of the rest.
The joys of smiling virtue are secure,
Sublime, and permanent; for ever sure.
See and confess, to hood-wink'd folly kind,
Heav'n's friendly laws were made to guide the blind ;
And those who see, were ev'ry law to cease,
Wou'd tread the path those laws prescribe, to peace,

To

64 FABLES IN VERSE.

To bliss! that bliss which wretched wand'lers lose,
Who, rashly bold, those faithful guides refuse.

F A B L E XVII.

VICE and VIRTUE;

OR,

The EXPERIMENT.

VIRTUE and Vice, two mighty
pow'rs,

Who rule this motley world of ours,
Disputed once which govern'd best,
And whose dependants most were *bleft*.
They reason'd, rally'd, crack'd their joke,
Succeeding much like other folk;
Their logic wasted, and their wit,
For neither of them would submit;
But both the doubtful point consent
To clear by fair *experiment*:
For this, some mortal, they declare,
In turn shall both their bounty share;

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 65

The pow'r of each, to bless him try'd,
Shall this their long dispute decide.
On *Hodge* they fix, a country boor,
As yet, rough, ign'rant, careless, poor.

Vice first exerts her pow'r to bless,
And gives him *riches* in excess;
With *gold* she taught him to supply
Each rising wish of *luxury*;
Hodge grew at length polite and great,
And liv'd like minister of state;
He *swore with grace*, got nobly drunk,
And kept in *pomp* his twentieth *punk*.

One morning, as in easy chair
Hodge sat, with ruminating air,
Vice, like a lady, fair and gay,
Approach'd;---and thus was heard to say.
(Behind her *virtue* all the while
Stood slyly list'ning with a smile;)
‘ Know favour'd mortal, know, that I
‘ The pleasures of thy life supply;
‘ I rais'd thee from the clay-built cell,
‘ Where want, contempt, and flav'ry dwell;
‘ And as each joy on earth is sold,
‘ To purchase all I gave thee gold:

K

‘ This

66 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ This made the charms of beauty thine ;
‘ This bles’s’d thee with the joys of wine ;
‘ This gave thee, in the rich repast,
‘ Whate’er can please the tutor’d taste :
‘ Confess the blessings I bestow,
‘ And pay the grateful thanks you owe :
 ‘ My name is *Vice*.---Cry’d *Hodge* (and
 sneer’d)
“ Long be your mighty name rever’d !
“ Forbid it heav’n---thus bles’s’d by you,
“ That I should rob you of your due.
“ To wealth ’twas you that made me heir,
“ And gave, for which I thank you, care ;
“ *Wealth* brought me *wine*, ’tis past a doubt,
“ And *wine*---see here’s a leg---*the gout*.
“ To *wealth* I owe my *French ragout*,
“ And that each morn and night I *S—w*.
“ This beauty brought---and with the dame
“ The — a bles’s’d companion came !
“ And now to show how much I prize
“ The joys that from your bounty rise ;
“ Each coupled with so dear a brother,
“ I’ll give you one, to take the other.

“ Avaunt !

FABLES IN VERSE. 67

" Avaunt! depart from whence you came;
" And thank your stars that I am lame."

Enrag'd and griev'd, away she flew,
And all her gifts from *Hodge* withdrew.

Now in this sad repentant hour,
Celestial *Virtue* try'd *her power* ;
For wealth, *content* the goddess gave,
The treasure of the poor and slave :
From *wild desires* she set him free,
And fill'd his breast with *charity* :
No more loud tumults riot breeds,
And *temp'rance* gluttony succeeds.

Hodge, in his native cot at rest,
Now *Virtue* found,---and thus address'd:

' Say,---for 'tis your's by proof to know,
' Can *Virtue* give thee bliss below ?
' Content my gift,---and *temp'rance* mine,
' And *charity*, tho' meek, *divine*.'

With blushing cheeks, and kindling eyes,
The man, transported, thus replies:

' *My Goddess* !---on this favour'd head
' The *life of life* THY blessings shed !
' My annual thousands when I told,
' Infatiate still---I sigh'd for gold ;

68 FABLES IN VERSE.

You gave content,---a boundless store !
‘ And rich indeed---I figh’d no more :
‘ With temp’rance came---delightful guest !
‘ Health,---tasteful food, and balmy rest ;
‘ With charity’s seraphic flame,
‘ Each gen’rous social pleasure came ;
‘ Pleasures which in possession rise,
‘ And retrospective thought supplies :
‘ Long to attest it may I live,
‘ That what *Vice* promises you give’.
Vice heard,---and swore that *Hodge* for hire
Had giv’n his verdict like a liar ;
And *Virtue*, turning with disdain,
Vow’d ne’er to speak to *Vice* again.

See then the joys which *Vice* pretends her own,
Fade at her touch, by *Virtue* nurs’d alone.
Virtue—whose steps the truly wise attend,
Sure guide to bliss, a never failing friend.
Each step from *Virtue* is a step to pain ;
Thus *Paul* affirms—“ that Godliness is gain.”
—Howe’er distinguish’d, and howe’er disguis’d,
Virtue, the source of bliss, is known and priz’d :

Not

FABLES IN VERSE. 69

Not her's the *silent solitary cell*,
Where ~~useless~~ men in dull inaction dwell :
Not her's the *zealot's voluntary woe*,
Who dreams that heav'n abhors it's works below ;
Not *rueful visage*, nor *dejected air*,
Nor *broken slumber*, nor the *midnight pray'r*:
Eternal smiles adorn her *cheerful face*,
And *peace and charity's immortal grace* :
Sneer, *debauchees*,—but still remember *this*,
The foes of *Virtue* are the foes of *bliss*.

F A B L E XVIII.

The BUTTERFLY and BOY.

T'WAS on a day serene and fair,
The sun was bright, the æther clear;
The rocking winds were lull'd to rest,
And ev'ry murmur'ring gale supprest;
When, tempted by th' alluring heat,
A FLY forsook her dark retreat
To taste the pleasures of the skies,
And show her wings of curious dyes;

She

70 FABLES IN VERSE.

She rambled wide, and in her tour
She borrow'd paint from ev'ry flow'r;
Till deck'd with all the insect grace,
She sparkled fairest of her race.

In all her splendor, pomp, and pride,
The winged gem a *Boy* espy'd,
Who, pleas'd to see how bright it shone,
Resolv'd to make the prize his own;
And straight with speed began to trace
The gilded *FLY* from place to place;
But conscious of some danger near,
The Butterfly her course would steer
Now high, then low, nowhere, then there; }
To balk the aim, or shun the blow,
She justly dreaded from the foe.

The *Lad*, still eager to pursue
The *FLY*, who always kept in view,
Thro' many a lane and meadow went,
(His soul was on the prize so bent)
Undaunted ran from morn to noon,
To gain the heart-enchanting boon.

At length, when sweat bedew'd his face,
And almost weary of the chace,

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 71

The **FLY** in evil hour is caught,
And homewards by the conqueror brought ;
Who (vainly) hop'd the glorious spoil
Would more than recompence his toil :
But while with pleasure and surprize }
Her radiant beauty feasts his eyes, }
The **FLY** escapes, and mounts the skies ; }
With rally'd force augments her flight,
And quick evades his keenest sight :
Then he (deluded youth) gave o'er
All hope to find the booty more,
Enrag'd, condemns his cruel fate,
And wept his folly—but too late.

Thus foolish mortals waste their days,
Pursuing *pleasures*, seeking *praise* ;
They hunt for *honours*, *wealth*, and *fame* ;
And risk their souls to gain a—*name* :
Chase ev'ry glitt'ring toy they spy, }
Just as the **LAD** pursu'd the **FLY** ; }
And ere they grasp the bawble die.

FABLE

F A B L E XIX.

The TRIUMPH of VICE.

SIR Robert, of all taxes clear,
 Had full a thousand pounds a year :
 His glory, to do all the good
 That one with such a fortune cou'd.
 Two sons, alone, his partner bore,
 (The honour'd dame was now no more.)
 Quite diff'rent turns in life they take ;
 One firm in virtue, one a rake ;
 A rake, that most profusely mad,
 Would spend the wealth which *Crœsus* had ;
 On *wine* and *whores* he made away
 A year's allowance in a day.
 “ O were that long liv'd father dead,
 “ And *I Sir Robert* in his stead :
 “ That brother too! ---O snatch him fate!
 “ Or his the *title* and *estate*.”
 In truth, he could proceed no further
 In sin, without committing murther:
 And,

FABLES IN VERSE. 73

And, who all other crimes has dar'd,
Will soon for murther stand prepar'd.
The proof's at hand—with impious mind,
What first he wish'd, he soon design'd:
His endless cravings to supply,
The fire and brother both must die.

The brother was the fire's delight,
And at his seat oft pass'd the night:
'Twas there that dreadful night he pass'd,
Which providence foresaw his last:
That night, on the dire deed intent,
Forth—and alone, the murd'rer went;
At midnight—that deep hour of gloom,
Unnotic'd reach'd his father's room,
Advent'rous, to the bed drew near,
And—launc'd his throat from ear to ear:
Crept softly to his brother's bed,
There left the knife beneath his head—
Withdrew.—The horrid scene was known
To heav'n's great eye, and heav'n's alone.

The morning rose—Oh! fight of pain!
Sir Robert in his bed is slain!

L

Who

74 FABLES IN VERSE.

Who can the barb'rous murd'rer be?
“ His eldest son, 'tis he, 'tis he!
“ He gave the wound! the ghastly wound!
“ See where the bloody knife is found.”
To goal he must:---the cause is try'd,
No point so easy to decide.
“ To where he lay, from stair to stair
“ The blood was trac'd---the knife was
there :”
The knife's produc'd all stain'd with gore:
Can judge or jury ask for more?
“ The man is guilty”—sentence past,
And soon at *Tyburn* breaths his last:
The fortune falls where wish'd to fall,
Sir Robert, thou hast gain'd it all.

Here suff'ring virtue no resource obtain'd,
And Vice might boast a triumph unrestrain'd;
Yet such events shock no impartial mind;
Heav'n, that permits 'em, may be just and kind:
Truth to the world such awful scenes convey,
This the great moral,—there's a Judgment Day.

FABLE

FABLES IN VERSE. 75

F A B L E XX.

SEQUEL to the TRIUMPH of VICE.

WHAT! title and estate possest,
And yet our wealthy Knight unblest!
Then be this truth rever'd below,
Guilt can no happiness bestow.
How chang'd of late;---but t'other day
Was ever youth so madly gay?
Now what a thing of spleen: and why?
Hear specious rumour thus reply;
“ By murd'rous hands his father dy'd,
“ His brother hangs---the parricide!
“ And whose unfeeling heart can blame
“ *Sir Robert* for his grief and shame?
This judgment form'd on partial view,
Much err'd; which well *Sir Robert* knew;
And felt aveng'd (his breast an hell)
The crime for which his brother fell:
“ *Thou art the man*”---his conscience spoke,
Dread as from *Nathan's* tongue it broke.

76 FABLES IN VERSE.

If sound of *murder* reach'd his ear,
Discovery was suspected near.
“ For if that eye which marks us all,
“ Can bear to see his *fav'rites* fall ;
“ *Its foes*, no doubt, must soon or late,
“ Be destin'd to *severer fate* :”
A flying thief the mob pursue ;
As if himself the thief, he flew ;
Flew, as wing'd light'ning never sped,
And thank'd his feet that sav'd his head.

Home scarce a moment cou'd he bear ;
A parent's ghost was stalking there :
It met him once---and in that bow'r,
Where oft he pass'd an ev'ning hour ;
The same his dress---tread---gesture---look,
That well-known tube---that fav'rite book :
Once, as in bed,---but wide awake,
(For seldom guilt repose can take)
It drew his curtain---shew'd the wound :
It spoke---with what an awful sound !
Three times, “ *MY SON*,” the phantom cry'd ;
The very words with which he dy'd :
Guilt forms of nothing, and of night,
The dreadful sound, and dreadful sight.

Abandon

FABLES IN VERSE. 77

Abandon home---'tis done---how vain!
Guilt haunts him still, and guilt is pain:
Conscience, that worm, against his will,
Conscience is his companion still:
Shall native country be resign'd?
Will travel cure a guilt-sick mind?
Bright thought!--next morn at break of day
Be all prepar'd to whirl away.
The night with whores is revell'd thro';
The chariot waits---kind dears adieu!
He issu'd,---at the coachman swore;
A message meets him at the door;
And there indeed---(for 'twas no jest)
His back receives, what? "an arrest."

The writ be d——d! I'll not be stay'd;
" You must---Sir William will be paid."
Stab me---Sir William! is it you?
I'll stay and fight the scoundrel: " do."
They meet---'tis long a doubtful strife;
But see! *Sir Robert* begs his life;
'Tis giv'n---for what? new scenes of woe:
More writs!---to jail the Knight must go:
Th' estate is sold---paid the last bill;
The pris'ner is---*Sir Robert* still:

Important

78 FABLES IN VERSE.

Important title! will it buy
A wh---e? a bottle? wretch go try:
Try too the world---to fix a friend,
Or (if thou dar'st) on heav'n depend:
“ Vain counsel! earth and heav'n's my foe;
“ Receive me then ye shades below:
“ Deep in my breast this blade be dy'd;
“ But I've no soul for suicide:
“ Yet why? since life I can't sustain,
“ Why court I death, and court in vain?
“ 'Tis but that secret to betray,
“ Which must be known another day;
“ That this vile hand *Sir Robert* slew:
“ He that knows all things, knows it true.”
The fact confess; he's try'd---is cast;
This night, poor criminal's, thy last:
Go!--thy few moments left, improve
To fit thee for the realms above:
“ Ah! no! just heav'n I can't appease;
“ No, tho' I wept a thousand seas:
Yet ask the *mercy* of the sky:
“ Upwards I dare not lift an eye;
“ Heav'n smile upon a wretch like me!
“ It will not---must not---cannot be!”

Victim

FABLES IN VERSE. 79

Victim to justice and despair,
He swung---thy ghost, *Sir Robert!* where?

M O R A L.

That man repents, but he repents in vain,
Who bleeds for guilt but as the source of pain;
And him heav'n's boundless mercy cannot save,
Who cannot hope it, and who dares not crave.

F A B L E XXI.

The HARE and PARTRIDGE.

THE sun was now retired to rest,
The sportsman's clam'rous gun sup-
prest;
A *Partridge* on the heath, alone,
Sat making melancholy moan.

Full oft she heav'd the deep-fetch'd figh;
When *Puss* by chance came limping by,
And kindly wish'd her to impart
The grief that wrung her lab'ring heart:

Herself

80 FABLES IN VERSE.

Herself, no stranger to distress,
Would pity, could she not redress:
Not she, (like many a human elf,
Who has no feeling but for self)
So mean a wretch to reason thus,
“ Thank heav’n! ’tis not so bad with *Puff’s*:”
“ Welcome, dear friend!” the bird replies;
“ A friend in need---how rare a prize!
“ Thy tender breast, full well I know,
“ For ever melts at other’s woe;
“ And fain would heal thy neighbour’s
grief,
“ But mine, superior, mocks relief:
“ Yet, at thy kind request, I’ll tell
“ What sad disaster late befel.
“ A tale it is, that sure must make
“ Any but human hearts to ake;
“ Much more, thy feeling sense to yearn;
“ And sympathize with deep concern:
“ This very morn our covey lay
“ All basking in the sunny ray;
“ I saw them all; transporting sight!
“ Full fledg’d, and plump, in happy plight,
“ Their

FABLES IN VERSE. 81

“ Their number full, and quite a score :
“ What cou’d a Parent wish for more !
“ But, long before the setting Sun,
“ They all fell victims to the gun.
“ Oh ! vile, unfeather’d, two-legg’d kind ;
“ In cruelty alone refin’d !
“ Oh ! miserable feather’d folk,
“ Who groan beneath their iron yoke !
“ How long—how long shall the creation
“ Be harrass’d with their usurpation.”

She ceas’d, and wept—the friendly Hare
Mingled her unavailing tear :

Then thus—‘ Thy sorrow must be great,
‘ For truly piteous is thy fate :
‘ But strive one moment to suspend
‘ Thy grief, and listen to thy friend ;
‘ Haply some hint I may suggest
‘ Will calm the tumult of thy breast :
‘ But, lest you say we’re prone to teach,
‘ But not to practice what we preach ;
‘ Your case is mine—the same our woes,
‘ Partridge and Hare have common foes.

M —— Long

82 FABLES IN VERSE.

—‘ Long since, when sportsmen thought
it hard

- ‘ To be from birds by law debarr’d ;
- ‘ ’Twas then my mate and young ones fell,
- ‘ That mate--those young--I lov’d so well.
- ‘ Haply I chanc’d to run away,
- ‘ And live to run another day :
- ‘ Now what, in such a situation,
- ‘ (You’ll ask) could give me consolation ?
- ‘ I had no need, thank heav’n, to fly,
- ‘ For comfort, to philosophy ;
- ‘ Ransack her moralizing lore,
- ‘ And run her grief-specifics o’er :
- ‘ For sample thus—*What can’t be cur’d,*
- ‘ The proverb says, *must be endur’d.*
- ‘ *When prudence can’t our ills redress,*
- ‘ *’Tis patience only makes them less.*
- ‘ *’Tis arrant folly to complain*
- ‘ *Of what dame nature’s laws ordain.*

—‘ These laws in theory may please,
‘ When mind and body are at ease ;
‘ But whether they will stand the test,
‘ They, who have try’d ‘em, know the best.

‘ I us’d

FABLES IN VERSE. 83

‘ I us’d not apathy—vile cant !
‘ Empiric! Stoic! human rant !
‘ An admirable art of healing,
‘ To take away the sense of feeling !
‘ Such med’cine never was design’d
‘ For creatures of a social kind.
‘ In short,—a remedy I found
‘ From the same hands that gave the wound.
‘ Behold the silly human elves
‘ Making worse havoc of themselves :
‘ ’Twixt man and man what ranc’rous strife :
‘ More ranc’rous still ’twixt man and wife.
‘ The ways and means they are pursuing
‘ To hasten on each other’s ruin ;
‘ So num’rous are, that to recite ’em,
‘ Would lead me on ad infinitum.
—‘ But should some *tyrant, mad, or drunk,*
‘ The slave of an inveigling punk,
‘ Some *coxcomb, fond of laurel’d fame,*
‘ Dupe to the whistling of a name;
‘ Or should *Ambition*, monster fell,
‘ On earth the delegate of hell,

M 2

’Twixt

84 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ ‘Twixt nations kindle jealous jar,
‘ And rouse the furious flames of war;
‘ See fruitful fields to desarts turn’d!
‘ See glorious cities sack’d and burn’d!
‘ With human gore see rivers red!
‘ Plains pil’d with mountains of the dead!
‘ Slaughter and famine, hand in hand,
‘ Stalk o’er the desolated land!
“ Cease! cease!” exclaim’d th’ astonish’d bird,
“ Thy pupil, friend, enough has heard
“ To silence sorrow’s discontent,
“ And make revenge herself relent.
—“ Come, let us seek the wonted plain,
“ I’ll try to peck a little grain.”

F A B L E XXII.

The PHEASANT and BLACK-BIRD.

’T IS very true, tho’ very strange,
(And so you’ll find in fancy’s range,) That

FABLES IN VERSE. 85

That discontented most appear,
And think their neighbours happier are.
The great will envy still the poor,
And say the *Cottage* is secure:
There, *sweet Content* expands her wing,
And nature makes perpetual spring;
While cares and troubles still await
Those who are burthen'd with the State.
How wide they aim, how near they gues,
Perhaps the fable may express.

A *Pheasant*, once upon a day,
When ev'ry thing around was gay,
Within the grove, in plaintive tone,
And piteous sort, pour'd forth his moan :
“ Ah me! of all the feather'd kind
“ That haunt the woods, or cut the wind,
“ Not one poor bird e'er did I see
“ Doom'd to so hard a fate as me.
— “ Why such gay plumage to behold?
“ Why purple, ting'd with radiant gold?
“ Why variegated thus my breast?
“ Why lovely to the eye confess'd?
“ This happy form, so bright, so gay,
“ Is but the pageant of a day.

“ The

86 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ The Sportsman comes, he points his gun,
“ My little busines soon is done;
“ My plumage of such beauteous dyes,
“ Now scatter’d, o’er the meadow flies ;
“ Each little bird with tuneful throat,
“ Who has not such a gaudy coat,
“ May blithely sing the live-long day,
“ And, chearful, hop from spray to spray:
“ The morning, noon, and night the same,
“ They’re not distinguishe as game:
“ The Black-bird, Nightingale, and Thrush,
“ Are each secure within the bush.”

‘ Hold,’ cried a *Black-bird* (near at hand)

‘ Your argument I understand;

‘ And find your notions are not right;

‘ In some things you’re mistaken quite.

‘ Why should you think your gaudy breast

‘ Is singled out from all the rest?

‘ Search ev’ry copse, look o’er the mead,

‘ Thousands, like you, are doom’d to bleed:

‘ Alike the *Black-bird*, and the *Lark*,

‘ As you, are made the Sportsman’s mark,

‘ Winter, or summer, ev’ry day

‘ Birds are to man a destin’d prey.

‘ My

FABLES IN VERSE. 87

‘ My fate uncertain is as thine;
‘ I wait my lot, and don’t repine :
‘ For ’tis in vain to sit and sigh,
‘ Since Birds and Men alike must die.
— ‘ As Heav’n shall will, I wait th’ event;
‘ And so should you, and be CONTENT.’

F A B L E XXIII.

The ANT’s PHILOSOPHY.

Go to the ANT thou *Sluggard*,” (ye *thoughtless* and *voluptuous*,) “ consider her ways and be wise.”

SPRING, hoary *Winter’s* lovely child,
Approach’d ; reviving *Nature* smil’d ;
With brighter gold the mornings glow’d,
The snows dissolv’d, the rivers flow’d ;
Warm western breezes shook the reed ;
Prolific dews impearl’d the mead ;
On ev’ry spray new leaves appear’d ;
The birds from ev’ry bush were heard ;
No more the folds the flock retain ,
Nor village fires the shiv’ring swain.

—Adorn’d

88 FABLES IN VERSE.

—Adorn'd with ev'ry gorgeous dye,
The gale receiv'd a *Butterfly*:
Vig'rous, and as the season gay,
He wanton'd in the beams of day.

—Two careful *Pismires*, each a sage,
By *nature wise*, and *wise by age*,
(While each the gaudy trifle sees)
Express'd, by turns, such thoughts as these:

—“Short is the date of *thoughtless mirth*.
“ The lightest vanity on earth!
“ The pleasures *idleness* bestows,
“ But sharpen *want's* succeeding woes;
“ Yon flutt'rer, recent from the dust,
“ Shall quickly prove the maxim just;
“ And righteous sure is *Jove's* decree,
“ That *famine* punish *gluttony*”.

His friend reply'd, ‘The fate of *Flies*
‘ I view with pity—not surprize.
‘ This *insect*, firstling of the year,
‘ In *ign'rance* lives, secure from fear;
‘ Nature he sees in all her pride,
‘ With all her bounties is supply'd,
‘ For him, spontaneous, plants arise,
‘ Where-e'er with wanton wings he flies;

‘ He

FABLES IN VERSE. 89

‘ He, from the transient vernal show’r,
‘ Sweet shelter finds in ev’ry flow’r,
‘ Enjoys the Sun’s returning ray,
‘ And hopes a *morrow* like *to-day*.
‘ ’Tis not ordain’d for him to know
‘ What seasons change this world below,
‘ No dreary winter he foresees,
‘ No freezing brook, no naked trees,
‘ No chilling blast, no steril plain,
‘ Perpetual clouds, incessant rain;
‘ Should we, (by long experience wise,)
‘ As friends, inform him and advise;
‘ Perhaps our plan of life pursu’d,
‘ In *winter* shall secure him food,
‘ From *riot* something he may spare,
‘ The blifs of future *springs* to share.’
--“ Vain thought!” the Sage reply’d again,
“ Experience proves your hopes are vain;
“ Alas! can *reason* conquer *fate*?
“ Can *counsel* make a *Fly* sedate?
“ Shall *be* new schemes of life pursue,
“ Believe *your* words, and copy *you*?
“ Know *wisdom*, the best boon of Heav’n,
“ *Wisdom* by none but *Jove* is giv’n:

N

“ On

90 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ On *us* bestow’d——perhaps alone.
“ For *Man*, our boasted Lord, has none :
“ *Proud wretch!* beneath whose heedless
 tread
“ We count a thousand thousand dead,
“ Whose staff, so huge, with casual blow
“ Our towns at once can overthrow ;
“ Ev’n he, whose life an age endures,
“ No *good* beyond the *now* secures ;
“ For *toys* he barters *health* and *ease*,
“ And leaps the precipice he sees :
“ Not *reason’s* warning voice he hears,
“ Or *wise by hours*, is *mad by years* ;
“ By *folly* still belies his birth,
“ And lives a very *FLY* on earth.
“ Thank Heav’n, (to Heav’n our thanks are
 due,)
“ We know our int’rest, and pursue :
“ Let *Man* rule earth, and claim the sky,
“ The dread, yet scorn, of you and I,
“ Our *bumbler lot* with *wisdom* blest,
“ *Jove’s* partial bounty marks the *best*. ”

Our *Ant’s* conclusion briefly to apply,
Let him who scorns it, *by his life* deny.

F A B L E XXIV.

M I N E R V A and A R A C H N E .

“ When pride cometh, then cometh shame: For pride
“ goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit be-
“ fore a fall. The Lord will destroy the house of the
“ proud, and cause their arrogancy to cease.”

IN ancient stories, it is said,
Arachne was a *Lydian* maid,
Well skill'd in weaving and in spinning;
Great requisites in *Lydian* women:
Her praises pierc'd the cottage roof,
How finely she could form the woof;
And, carried by the winds on high,
Enter'd the conclave of the sky.

—*Minerva* heard, and fain would know
If the applause was just, or no.
Like an old woman soon array'd,
She sought this all-excelling maid:
She found her busied in her art,
And neat and clean in ev'ry part.

92 FABLES IN VERSE.

Unknown, the *Goddess* curt'sy made,
And then advancing, thus she said:
“ Your praises, echo'd far and wide,
“ Are such as cannot be deny'd :
“ In this you do extremely well,
“ To strive in all things to excell ;
“ No doubt your morn and ev'ning pray'r,
“ Has made you much *Minerva's* care ;
“ The *blue-ey'd Goddess* of the art,
“ Still loves the meek and humble heart;
“ And will with honours, soon or late,
“ Crown those who do her supplicate”.

Arachne heard; but heard with pain;
By nature *insolent* and *vain*,
Unloos'd forthwith her impious tongue,
And thus in strains disdainful fung :
‘ What is the *blue-ey'd Maid* to me,
‘ Since I can work as well as she?
‘ As well as her the shuttle throw,
‘ As she herself may see and know ;
‘ Her boasted pow'rs I dare defy,
‘ Tho' she's a native of the *sky* ;
‘ Yet I, an earth-born, mortal maid,
‘ Crave not her help—nay *scorn her aid*.

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 93

The *Goddess*, anger'd at her *pride*,
No longer strove herself to hide ;
But like *Minerva* shone confest,
In flowing robe, and helmet crest :
Conviction seiz'd the trembling maid ;
She would have knelt, but was afraid :
And wonder'd much, to find her size
Was dwindled almost in a trice
T'a *Spider*; doom'd to crawl that floor,
Where late she ply'd the loom before ;
While thus *Minerva's* voice was heard ;
(All nations should the speech regard ;
But chiefly you, ye *British* fair,
Make her kind meaning still your care)
“ Ye *nymphs*, posses'd of ev'ry charm
“ Which can to admiration warm ;
“ Lay vanity at once aside,
“ Lest you are punish'd for your pride :
“ Revere the Gods for what you have,
“ And still their kind assistance crave :
“ Nor dare deny their sov'reign pow'r,
“ Who still are present ev'ry hour.
— “ Should you in ev'ry art excel,
“ Unless you think and act as well,

“ ’Tis

94 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ ’Tis not your *beauty*, nor your *parts*,
“ (Tho’ they gain much on human hearts;))
“ That can at any rate lay claim
“ To *wisdom’s* most *celestial name*;
“ If once you spurn her voice and aid,
“ You’ll find yourselves *undone, betray’d*;
“ For ever by the good discarded,
“ Like *Spiders* only be regarded;
“ To live in fear, and restless strife,
“ Mere reptiles for the rest of life.”

F A B L E XXV.

The Happy Mole.

“ Let no one of you be puffed up against another :
“ For who maketh thee to differ from another ? What
“ hast thou that thou didst not receive ? And if thou
“ didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst
“ not received it.

IN this vain world of noise and strife,
Where shall we fix the happiest life?

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 95

The *Soldier*, full of wounds and scars,
Wishes for peace instead of wars:

Tho' wreaths of glory make him *great*,
He envies those in *bumble state*.

The *Farmer*, crown'd with *peace and health*,
Is anxious for the *Merchant's wealth*:

The *Merchant* wishes for the *plain*,
To quit, for ease, the *stormy main*:
Thus all are fill'd with *hopes and fears*,
Perplex'd with *follies*, and with cares:

Life is a burthen as they make it:
On such conditions who would take it?

The only happy in the nation,
Are those contented in their station.

Upon a time the woodland race,
Each weary'd with a diff'rent chace,
Near to an humble mole-hill paſt,
And on the *Mole* their eyes they caſt.

The Lordly *Lion*, full of pride,
Began his meanness to deride;
To live so low, and hide his head
Beneath that turf——the common bed.
The *Horse* observ'd his want of speed;
He had short legs it was agreed.

The

96 FABLES IN VERSE.

The *Tyger* said, altho' he'd claws,
They little stronger were than straws;
And therefore were of little stead,
Unless in making of his bed.

The *Fox* had got a certain rule
To prove he was a downright *fool* ;
For, having chose to dwell so low,
He might be caught by every foe.
Another said his strength was small,
Not fit for any thing at all.

The *Lynx*, who follow'd them behind,
Knew very well that he was *blind* ;
Therefore declar'd that such a creature
Was form'd for wretchedness by nature.

Hear me, my friends, the *Mole* reply'd,
Nor think me quite beneath your pride :

“ All gracious *Wisdom* has defin'd,
“ That *happiness* is in the mind ;
“ If I'm *contented* in my sphere,
“ Pray tell me who is *happier* here ?
“ The *Lion* boasts his noble breed,
“ The *Horse* of his amazing *speed* ;
“ The *Fox* his *cunning*, and his arts,
“ Alas ! I envy not their parts ;

“ The

FABLES IN VERSE. 97

“ The *Tyger* his extensive *claws*,
“ And his voraciousness of *jaws*;
“ The *Lynx*’s beam, supremely bright,
“ May give to him a clearer light;
“ But what was this,” he said, “ to him,
“ Since nature pleas’d to make me dim;
“ Strength, speed, and *cunning*, *fight*, and all;
“ As to my lot they do not fall,
“ I should be *foolish* to repine
“ ’Cause such endowments are not mine;
“ I have no real cause to rue ’em;
“ The reason this—I never knew ’em:
“ My humble state I ne’er lamented,
“ But as a *Mole*, I live CONTENTED.”

The brutes who thus had spent their wit,
Began to claw their heads a bit;
The cunning *fox* was seen to cool,
And own’d—‘ indeed *he was no fool.*’

O F A B L E

98 FABLES IN VERSE.

F A B L E XXVI.

The PELICAN and SPIDER.

“ The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their
“ own children:—even the wild and ravenous beasts of
“ the forest draw out the breast; they give suck to their
“ young ones: but the daughters of my people are be-
“ come cruel, like the Ostriches in the wilderness, who
“ are hardened against their young ones, as if they were
“ not their’s; because God hath deprived them of wis-
“ dom; neither hath he imparted unto them under-
“ standing.”

THE sphere of mild, domestic life,
A daughter, mother, mistress, wife,
Who fills approv’d, shall live in story,
And gain the height of female glory.
To you—believe an honest song,
The charities of life belong;
Those gentler offices that bind
The social ties of human kind:

All

FABLES IN VERSE. 99

All praises, but for these, decry;
And *fame* is blasting *infamy*.

But chief, o'er all, ye wiser fair,
The *mother's* sacred charge revere:
Pure, heart-ennobling, blest employ,
Which saints and angels lean, with joy,
To view from heav'n! --- which can dispense,
O'er all the soul, their own benevolence.

Hail, holy task! 'tis thine t' impart
Such virtues to the melting heart;
Such heights of moral grace to reach,
As proud philosophy could never teach.

Maternal love! — the iron-soul'd
Melt at thy touch; the coward, bold
Become at once, thro' rocks will force;
Nor flood, nor fire, can stop his course;
Will brave the *Lybian lion* wild,
Should danger threat the favorite *child*.

If there's a *she*, whom pride or pleasure
Tempt to forget her *living treasure*;
Or to her own indulgence grants
That care or cost her *infant* wants;
What wonder, should the sage insist,
She yields in yearning to a *beast*:

100 FABLES IN VERSE.

The good abhor, the wits deride her,
 And read her hist'ry in the *Spider*.
 Who trusts her nursling to another ;
 A parent she—but not a MOTHER.

Beneath a venerable shade
 The pious *Pelican* had made
 Her humble nest :—with rapture, there
 Incessant ply'd the *mother's* care ;
 From night to morn, from morn to night,
 Not more her *duty* than *delight*,
 To watch the tender chirping brood,
 Protect them, and provide their food.
 At dewy eve, at morning's spring,
 Soft-canopy'd beneath her wing,
 They slept secure :—herself sustains,
 Patient, the cold and drenching rains ;
 Nor fear'd, nor shunn'd the furious storm ;
 Her callow nestlings dry and warm.
 Whate'er her early search supplies,
 Deny'd her own necessities,
 She gave her young ; and prov'd, from thence,
 The *luxury* of *abstinence*.

In vain the *concert* in the grove,
 In vain the wing'd *assembly* strove

To

FABLES IN VERSE. 101

To tempt her from the *nursery's care*;
Her *music*, and her *mirth* were there.

Thus liv'd she, till one fatal day
Doom'd all her *virtues* to display:
For now the morning's wish'd supply
Eludes her utmost industry:
She fish'd the brook, she div'd the main,
Search'd hill, and dale, and wood, in vain;
Not one poor grain the world affords
To feed her *helpless*, hungry birds:
What should she do?—ah! see they faint
With unavailing, weak complaint;
These, dearer than her vital breath,
Resign to famine's ling'ring death?
The thought was frenzy:—No; she press'd
Her sharp beak on her own kind breast
With *cruel piety*;—and fed
Her wond'ring infants as she bled:
“Accept” she cry'd, “dear, pretty crew!
“This sacrifice to love and you.”
‘Mad fool, forbear,’ exclaim'd a *Spider*
That indolently loung'd beside her:
‘This horrid act of thine evinces
Your ignorance of courts and princes:

‘Lord

102 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ Lord what a creature! ---tear thy neck-fast
 ‘ To give thy *peevish brats* a breakfast!
 ‘ Hadst thou among the *great* resided,
 ‘ And mark’d *their manners* well, as I did,
 ‘ The mother’s *milk*, much less her *blood*,
 ‘ Is ne’er the *well-born infant’s* food.

——‘ Why there’s my Lady *Ostrich* now,
 ‘ Who visits in the vale below,
 ‘ Knows all the fashion on this head:
 ‘ Soon as her la’ship’s brought to-bed,
 ‘ She,—else the birth would prove her curse,
 ‘ Gives it the elements to *nurse*.
 ‘ ’Tis true, some accident may hurt it,
 ‘ It’s limbs be broken and distorted;
 ‘ Admit there’s chance it does not live,
 ‘ *Pleasure* is our prerogative;
 ‘ And brooms and brushes be my ruin,
 ‘ Ere in a nest I’d sit a stewing;
 ‘ Or, for my *duty’s* sake, forsooth,
 ‘ To *nursing* sacrifice my youth;
 ‘ Ere let my *brats* my flesh devour;
 ‘ I’d eat them up a score an hour.’
 “ Foul fiend!” the lovely martyr cry’d,
 “ Avaunt! thy horrid person hide;

“ *Folly*

FABLES IN VERSE. 103

“ *Folly* and *vice* thy soul disgrace ; }
“ ’Twas these, not *Pallas*, spoil’d thy face, }
“ And sunk thee to the reptile race : }
“ Yes, thy own *bowels* hung thee there,
“ A felon out of nature’s care,
“ Twixt heav’n and earth, abhorr’d of both,
“ Emblem of *selfishness* and *sloth.*”

Ye *Coterieans!* who profess
No busines, but to *dance* and *dress* ;
Pantheists! who no God adore ;
Housewives! who stay at home no more ;
Wives without husbands ! *mothers* too,
Whom your *own children* never knew !
Who lesse the *blessed sun* esteem
Than *lamps* and *tapers* greasy gleam ;
Ye morning *gamesters*, *walkers*, *riders* !
Say—are ye *Pelicans* or *Spiders* ?

FABLE

F A B L E XXVII.

The Boy and Poppy.

ONE morn, in spring's delightful time,
 When nature shone in all her prime ;
 When verdure fresh, and painted flow'rs,
 Adorn'd the gardens, meads, and bow'rs ;
 Young *Dick* (for entrance was deny'd) }
 Thro' chinks and holes a garden spy'd, }
 Replete with flow'rs on ev'ry side. }
 The *rose*'s blush his bosom warm'd ;
 The modest *lily*'s whiteness charm'd ;
 The *pink*, the *jess'mine*, and *jonquil* ;
 The air with grateful odours fill :
 The stately POPPY too was there,
 Adorn'd with tinctures red and fair ;
 And thousands more I've not express'd,
 All in their utmost grandeur dress'd.

Young *Dick* beheld the grateful sight
 With wond'rous rapture and delight ;

And

FABLES IN VERSE. 105

And thus, like one excessive proud,
The *boy* declar'd his mind aloud :

- ‘ O happy *boy*! were these but mine,
‘ I then should be exceeding fine,
‘ And *Harry*, *Jack*, and *Tom*, outshine. }
‘ Could I be of these flow’rs possest,
‘ I’d wear ’em always on my breast, }
‘ And surely none cou’d be more blest.’ }

But *gazing Dick* did most admire
The stately *Poppy*’s gay attire ;
It’s lofty head of majesty,
And gaudy colours, pleas’d his eye ;
But ne’er suspected nauseous smell,
With beauty so complete, could dwell.

- ‘ That flow’r,’ said he, ‘ which yonder grows,
‘ By far excels the blushing *rose* :
‘ That flow’r outshines the rest, as far
‘ As does the *moon* a puny *star*.
‘ Were that but mine I’d be content;
‘ On that my mind is wholly bent ;
‘ And, oh ! methinks ’tis very hard,
‘ That from it I should be debarr’d.’

Just as he’d spoke appear’d in sight
A lovely dame, array’d in white,

P Posseſſing,

106 FABLES IN VERSE.

Possessing, what we seldom find,
A noble and a gen'rous mind.
On all the flow'rs she cast her eyes,
Admiring much their beauteous dyes ;
And mov'd along, in pleasant mood,
Towards the place where *Richard* stood ;
On whom she cast a smiling look,
And thus in gentle language spoke.

“ What is it that you want my *boy*? ”
“ Declare your mind, and be not coy ; ”
“ For I shall not refuse to grant,
“ Whate'er, in reason, you may want.”
‘ I thank you, madam,’ *Dick* replies,
‘ With pleasure sparkling in his eyes ;
‘ No large donation would I have ;
‘ A single flow'r is all I crave.’
“ Well, come my *boy*, to give you ease,
“ I'll let you get just which you please : ”
Then straight the door she did unpin,
And bid the *youngster* enter in.
Without delay the *novice* flew
To where the painted *Poppies* grew ;
And that which charm'd him so before,
With diligence he did explore :

On

FABLES IN VERSE. 107

On that he seiz'd; for that alone
Did he desir to make his own:
Then *Dick* (as well as he knew how)
Pull'd off his hat, and made a bow;
And with a grateful heart retir'd;
Possess'd of what he most desir'd.

Elate with pride, he hastes away
To where his cronies us'd to play:
—‘ See here, you rogues! see here! he cries;
‘ The finest flow'r beneath the skies.’
Upon the flow'r the youngsters gaz'd,
And each it's wond'rous beauty prais'd;
But one, more knowing than the rest,
Stood up, and thus young *Dick* addreſt.
“ ‘Tis true, the flow'r you now enjoy
“ Appears delightful to the eye,
“ But underneath it's gaudy dyes,
“ A noxious, dang'rous poison lies.”
Young *Dick*, who thought the flow'r bely'd;
The *Poppy* to his nose apply'd;
But how was he chagrin'd, to find
So foul a smell with beauty join'd;
• Who,’ says the *boy*, ‘could e'er have thought
‘ So fine a flow'r with poison fraught:’

108 FABLES IN VERSE.

This said, he flung, without delay,
The fetid, painted flow'r, away.

M O R A L.

Ye swains, when you're inclin'd to wed ;
Be not by *outward beauty* led ;
For *true content* can never flow
From costly dress, or *outward show* :
But if, when you're by *Hymen* join'd,
Content and *happiness* you'd find,
Regard the beauties of the mind. }

F A B L E XXVIII.

The TULIP and the LILY of the VALLEY.

Those who observe the *belles* and *beaux*
Who flutter in superior clothes,
Will find them ready to despise
All merit clad in meaner guise.
The bard, who many a tuneful song
Has warbled to the well-dress'd throng ;
The

FABLES IN VERSE. 109

The grave and philosophic head,
Who many a moral lecture read ;
If dress be wanting to their aid,
May die in bleak misfortune's shade :
No hand to help, no friend to guide,
For *poverty's* unknown to *pride* :
Yet *modest worth*, with patience blest,
Despises *fools* tho' *gayly dreſt*,
And may most justly thus reply
To each *proud scorner* they come night ;
— It happen'd once, no matter where,
(The place is of no service here,)
A proud and gaudy *Tulip* spy'd
The *valley's Lily* near her side ;
Her vanity was touch'd to see
One born to such a low degree ;
She spread her leaves, and rais'd her head,
And to the *Lily* thus she said :
— ‘ What means this insolence to me ?
‘ Or who d'ye take me pray to be ?
‘ That such a *rustic thing* as you
‘ Should dare appear within my view ?
‘ Know, *base-born*, I'm the gard'ner's pride ;
‘ Superior to each flow'r beside ;

‘ My

110 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ My gay, resplendent charms, behold !
‘ Of brown, blue, purple, crimson, gold !
‘ The *rainbow* cannot boast (you see)
‘ Of colours, such variety.
‘ Hence--leave me--keep your humble *vale*,
‘ Your charms, perhaps, may there prevail ;
‘ And in the bosom be display’d,
‘ Of *Doll*, the rosy dairy-maid ;
‘ While I, to charm the florist’s sight,
‘ Still rise to ravish with delight.

The *Lily of the vale* reply’d,
“ Conceited thing ! puff’d up with pride !
“ I own that you’ve a handsome dress ;
“ Your tints are fine, I must confess ;
“ Your colours may attract the eye
“ Of each beholder passing by ;
“ But who would e’er a nosegay make,
“ Of what stinks worse than any jake ?
—“ As to myself,—my *sweets* perfume
“ The valley, and my lady’s room ;
“ She often takes me to her breast ;
“ But does your *nauseous* scents detest :
“ Shine on,—but learn to be more *umble*,
“ Lest by your pride you get a tumble :
 “ Boast

FABLES IN VERSE. III

“ Boast not your variegated hue ;
“ In nature there’s as fine as you.”

*External forms alone, fools only prize ;
While genuine merit captivates the wise.
“ Fortune in men has some small diff’rence made ;
“ One flaunts in rags ; one flutters in brocade ;”
Yet real worth most justly claims respect,
However low its state, or meanly deck’d.*

F A B L E XXIX.

The CATERPILLAR and BUTTERFLY.

The reader is desired to look upon the *metamorphosis*, or *transformation* of the *reptile* into the *fly*, as figurative of the glorious *state* of the *blessed spirits above* ; from the enjoyments of which *blissful state* our misconduct here may for ever exclude us.

THE morning blush’d with vivid red,
And night in fullen silence fled ;
Sad *Philomel* no more complains ;
The *lark* begins his sprightly strains ;
Light

112 FABLES IN VERSE.

Light paints the flow'rs of various hue,
And sparkles in the pendant dew;
Life moves o'er all the quicken'd green,
And beauty reigns unrival'd queen.

Green as the leaf on which he lay
A caterpillar wak'd to day,
And looking round, he chanc'd to spy
A leaf of more inviting dye :
From where he lay he crawl'd, and found
The verdant spot's indented bound ;
Stretch'd from the verge, he strove to gain
The neighb'ring leaf; but strove in vain.

—In that nice moment,---prompt to save,
A brother-worm this warning gave.

—“ O! turn, advent'rous as thou art,
“ Nor hence, in hope quite vain, depart :
“ What, tho' the leaf that tempts thee, shows
“ More tasteful food, more soft repose ;
“ What, tho' with brighter spangles gay,
“ It's dew reflects an earlier ray ?
“ Oh ! think what dangers guard the prize ;
“ Oh ! think what dangers ; and be *wise*.
“ The pass from leaf to leaf, forbear ;
“ Behold how high they wave in air !

“ And

FABLES IN VERSE. 113

“ And should’st thou fall, tremendous
thought!

“ What ruin would avenge thy fault?

“ Thy mangled carcase, writh’d with pain,

“ Shall mark with blood the dusty plain:

“ Then death!—the dread of all below;

“ Thy wish—alone can end thy woe:

“ Untimely death!—for now to die,
“ Is ne’er to rise a *Butterfly.*”

—‘ *A Butterfly!*’ th’ advent’rer cry’d,

‘ What’s that? “ *a bird,*” his friend reply’d.

“ *A bird,* the loveliest *bird* that flies,

“ To which this *reptile form* shall rise;

“ The joyful season *Time* shall bring;

“ He bears it on his rapid wing.

“ An age there is, when all our kind
Disdain the ground, and mount the wind:

“ And shou’d thy friend this age attain,”

With haste th’ advent’rer cry’d again,

‘ Say, what assurance canst thou give,

‘ That I with *birds,* a *bird* shall live?

‘ For, could I trust thy pleasing tale,

‘ No *sensual* wish shou’d e’er prevail:

Q

‘ Fo

114 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ For what, that *worms* obtain, can vie
‘ With blifs of *birds* that wing the sky?’
“ Believe my words,” th’ adviser said,
“ Since not of private int’reſt bred :
“ Not on *thy life* or *death* depend
“ *My pleasure* or *my pain*;—attend!
“ Like thee, to all the future blind,
“ I knew not wings for worms design’d,
“ Till laſt yon Sun’s ascending light
“ Remov’d the dusky shades of night :
“ Soon as his rays, from heav’n sublime,
“ Shone on that leaf you wish to climb ;
“ That leaf which shades, at certain hours,
“ This less conspicuous spot of ours ;
“ Surpriz’d, a lovely form I saw,
“ Which ſtruck me with delight and awe ;
“ ’Twas near—and while my looks betray’d
“ My wonder,—thus the *stranger* ſaid :
—‘ If view’d by *thee* with wond’ring eyes
‘ *My* graceful shape and vary’d dyes,
‘ New wonder ſtill prepare to feel,
‘ From truths, which I ſhall now reveal :
‘ For know, like *thine* my humble birth ;
‘ Like *thee*, *I* crawl’d a *worm* on earth.’

“ Ah!

FABLES IN VERSE. 115

“ Ah! mock me not, said I ; nor seek
“ A worthless triumph o'er the weak ;
“ Canst thou, thy form with down o'erspread,
“ By nature crown'd thy regal head ;
“ Canst thou my reptile shape have worn ?
“ My reptile shape ! of all the scorn !
“ Hast thou ! whose gorgeous wings display
“ Each vary'd tint that drinks the day,
“ More bright than drops of orient dew,
“ More gay than flow'rs of gaudiest hue ;
“ With purple edg'd, and fring'd with gold,
“ Like light, too splendid to behold !
“ Hast thou, an abject worm like me,
“ Crawl'd prone on earth ? — it cannot be.”
---“ Oh ! cease thy doubts, the stranger cry'd,
“ To faith thy happiness ally'd.
“ Not thrice the morn these eyes have view'd,
“ Since genial spring my life renew'd ;
“ From death-like slumbers wak'd, I found
“ A guardian shell invest me round ;
“ The circling shield I broke, nor knew
“ How long my safety thence I drew ;
“ But soon perceiv'd, and knew the spot,
“ Where once, a worm, I fix'd my lot :

Q 2

“ The

116 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ The past, with wonder touch’d my breast,
“ More wonder still the NOW imprest,
“ With pleasure mixt:----the pleasure grew
“ At ev’ry thought, at ev’ry view ;
“ Transform’d, my unknown pow’r I try,
“ I wave my *wings*, I rise ! I fly !
“ Enraptur’d with the blissful change,
“ From field to field I wanton range;
“ From flow’r to flow’r, from tree to tree,
“ And see whate’er I wish to see ;
“ Now glide along the daisy’d ground,
“ Now wheel in wanton circlets round ;
“ Now mount aloft, and play in air,
“ Transported when I will, and where :
“ Still present to whate’er invites,
“ *Each moment brings me new delights* ;
“ Nor fear allay’s the joy I know ;
“ The *dangers* scorn’d that lurk *below*.
“ No trampling hoof, my former dread,
“ Can crush me, mangled, to the dead :
“ Ev’n man himself pursues in vain,
“ My sportive circuit o’er the plain.”
‘ He said, and raptur’d with the thought,
‘ New charms his bright’ning plumage
caught ; ‘ He

FABLES IN VERSE. 117

‘ He spread his wings, his rapid flight
‘ I trac’d with fond desiring sight ;
‘ Oh ! glorious state ! — reserv’d to this,
‘ I risk not life for reptile bliss :
‘ Oh ! catch the glowing wish from me,
‘ The same the bliss reserv’d for thee ;
‘ Desist from ev’ry rash design ;
‘ And beauteous tinted wings are thine.’

He ceas’d — th’ advent’rer thus reply’d,
“ By thee the fancy’d change be try’d ;
“ The NOW is mine, the NOW alone ;
“ *The future, Fate’s—a dark unknown!*
“ To nature’s voice my ears incline
“ All lovely, loving, all divine !
“ To joy *she* courts, *she* points the way,
“ And chides this cold, this dull delay.
“ Farewell ! — let *hope thy bliss* supply,
“ And count thy gains with fancy’s eye :
“ Be *thine the wings* that time shall send,
“ *Believing* and obliging friend.”

He said ; and sneering fly disdain,
The neighb’ring leaf attempts to gain ;
He falls — all bruis’d on earth he lies ;
Too late repents: he groans, and dies.

His

118 FABLES IN VERSE.

His friendly monitor, with care,
Avoide each pleasure-baited snare ;
False pleasure; *false*, and *fatal* too !
Superior joys he keeps in view :
They come.—The genial *spring* supplies
The *wings* he hop'd, and lo ! he flies !
Tastes all that summer funs prepare,
And all the joys of earth and AIR.

F A B L E XXX.

The Dove and Ant.

IS there an eye that never flows
From *sympathy* of others woes ?
Is there an ear that still doth fail
To tingle at a *mournful tale* ?
When scenes of *sore distress* are nigh,
Hard is the heart that cannot *sigh*.
—If with *neglect*, or with *disdain*,
We look on *mis'ry*, *grief*, or *pain* ;
Or can suppress the rising *groan*
For ev'ry *suff'ring* not our own ;

In

FABLES IN VERSE. 119

In *human shapes* such *souls* that dwell,
Cockatrice forms would suit as well.

By sympathizing with *distress*,
We shall not find our comforts less ;
For with the *anguish*, 'twill impart
A *pleasure* to the *feeling heart*.
How sweet the *joys*! the *peace* and *rest*,
That reign in ev'ry *tender breast*!
The *meanest* in *distress*, the wise
Will *freely serve*, and not *despise*.

A lab'ring ant (who half a league
Had dragg'd his load with vast fatigue ;)
Was trailing, from a distant barn,
A huge, prodigious grain of corn ;
Tott'ring, beneath the burthen bent,
Diffolv'd in sweat, his strength near spent ;
As many a weary step he took
Along the margin of a brook ;
He homeward trudg'd thro' thick and thin,
But miss'd a step, and tumbled in :
The dashing waves around him fly,
And foam and rage ;—run mountains high.
He toil'd, and with unequal strife,
Panted, and struggled hard for life :

The

120 FABLES IN VERSE.

The waves come booming o'er his head ;
His pow'rs are gone, his hopes are fled ;
He flounces, plunges, strives in vain ;
He sinks; then rising, floats again ;
Resists the stream, and holds his breath,
Despairs of help,—expecting Death.
—When lo! a *Dove*, with pity mov'd,
(For *ev'ry living thing she lov'd*,)
Beheld, with deep concern oppress'd,
The honest rustic thus distress'd :
Just where she saw him gasping lie,
She pluck'd a twig, and dropp'd it nigh ;
He mounts, like sailor on an oar,
Securely perch'd, and reach'd the shore ;
Then shook his limbs, and rais'd his head,
And thus to *his deliverer* said :

‘ To one unask'd, who could bestow
‘ Such service, more than thanks I owe ;
‘ Receive, devoid of skill or art,
‘ Th' effusion of a *grateful heart* :
‘ You may partake of all I hoard,
‘ Sure of a welcome at my board.’

—The gentle *Dove*, smiling, replies,
(Soft meekness beaming from her eyes,) “ The

FABLES IN VERSE. 121

" The highest joys on earth, we find,
" Spring from a tender, feeling mind ;
" *Sensations rapt'rous* rising there,
" Repay with int'rest all our care :
" By kindness unto others shown
" Imparting bliss —— we form our own.
" Sweet is the *infelt joy* that flows
" From kind relief of others woes ;
" The bosom that with pity burns,
" Bless'd in itself, wants no returns."

She spoke: and mounting, spreads her wings,
And wheels aloft in airy rings,
Towards the well-known shady grove,
To nurse her young, and bless her love.
—At length, when snows deform'd the year,
When food was scarce, the frost severe ;
The grateful *Ant*, who had with pain
Amass'd a plenteous store of grain ;
And, as the *Dove* might want, he thought,
To find his benefactor sought :

Long had he rov'd the forest round,
Before the gentle *Dove* he found ;
At distance seen ; too far to hear
His voice ; —— a sportsman much too near,

R

With

122 FABLES IN VERSE.

With lifted tube, and levelling eye,
The fatal lead prepar'd to fly ;
His aim was pointed at the *Dove*,
The trigger just began to move ;
With horror struck, the *Ant* beheld ;
By *gratitude* and *love* impell'd,
He mounts, and to his uncle clings ;
With all his force the fowler stings :
That moment was his piece discharg'd ;
He starts, miss'd aim ;---the *Dove's* enlarg'd.

Pleas'd with the thought of service done,
And now the man's revenge to shun,
He hastily the *Dove* pursu'd,
Long wand'ring through the lonely wood ;
Till settled on a tree he finds her,
And of their mutual help reminds her.
' We wisely act, my worthy friend,'
Says he, ' when we assistance lend ;
' And when for that the meanest call,
' The joy resulting is not all ;
' It's prudent too ; there's none so low,
' To whom we may not favors owe.'

Freedom, and *life itself*, oft springs
From small and despicable things.

He

FABLES IN VERSE. 123

He that is wise will strive to shine
In *love*, and CHARITY divine !
For what we lend to others aid,
We soon or late shall be repaid.

“ *Self-love* but serves the *virtuous mind* to wake,
“ As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake ;
“ The centre mov’d, a circle straight succeeds,
“ Another still, and still another spreads :
“ *Friend, parent, neighbour,* first it will embrace ;
“ His country next ; and next all human race.
“ Grasp the whole worlds of *reason, life, and sense,*
“ In one close system of *benevolence.*”

F A B L E XXXI.

H Y M E N and D E A T H.

The reader is desired to look upon this fable and its appendages, not as a satire, or burlesque on the ordinance, or state of *matrimony*, when the union has the mutual sanction of the hearts of the united hands :—but as intended to dissuade parents, guardians, &c. from prompting, or promoting alliances of this kind, merely from lucrative views; and parties themselves from being invested with this public sanction from such motives only: for tho' marriage is a very *honourable* state; it may, in such cases, be an extremely *miserable* one.’

R 2 —“ There

124 FABLES IN VERSE.

“ —— THERE are no bargains driv’n,
“ Nor *marriages* clapp’d up in *heav’n*:
“ And that’s the reason, as some guess
“ There is no *heav’n* in *marriages*.
“ Their busines^s there is only *love*,
“ Which *marriage* is not like t’improve;
“ For now ’tis made a very mart,
“ Between the one and th’ other part:
“ But *gen’rous love* will not abide,
“ When ’tis *against its nature* ty’d;
“ Disdains *against its will* to stay,
“ But struggles out, and flies away:
“ No *force* can e’er make it comply
“ T’ endure the *matrimonial tie*.”

—Sixteen, d’ye say? nay then ’tis time;
Another year destroys your prime.
But stay—the settlement! “ that’s made.”
Why then’s my simple girl afraid?
Yet hold a moment, if you can,
And heedfully this *fable* scan.

---The shades were fled, the morning blush’d,
The winds were in their caverns hush’d,

FABLES IN VERSE. 125

When *Hymen*, pensive and sedate,
Held o'er the fields his musing gait.
Behind him, thro' the green-wood shade,
Death's meagre form the *God* survey'd;
Who quickly, with gigantic stride,
Out-went his pace, and join'd his side:
The chat on various subjects ran,
Till *Hymen*, angry, thus began.

Relentless death! whose iron sway,
Mortals, reluctant, must obey ;
Still of thy pow'r shall I complain,
And thy too-partial hand arraign:
When *Cupid* brings a pair of hearts,
All-over stuck with equal darts,
Thy cruel shafts *my* hopes deride,
And cut the knot that *Hymen* ty'd.
Shall not the *bloody* and the *bold*,
The *miser*, hoarding up his gold,
The *barlot*, reeking from the stew,
Alone thy fell revenge pursue?
But must the *gentle* and the *kind*,
Thy fury, undistinguish'd, find?

— The *monarch* calmly thus reply'd;
Weigh well the cause, and then decide.

That

126 FABLES IN VERSE.

That *friend* of your's, you lately nam'd,
Cupid, is only to be blam'd;

Then let the charge be justly laid :

That *idle boy* neglects his trade ;

And hardly once in twenty years

A couple to your temple bears.

The *wretches*, whom your office blends,

Silens now, or *Plutus* sends ;

Hence *care*, and *bitterness*, and *strife*,

Are common to the *nuptial* life.

— Believe me; more than all mankind,

Your vot'ries my compassion find ;

Yet cruel am I call'd, and base,

Who seek the *wretched* to release ;

The *captives* from their *bonds* to free,

Indissoluble, but for me.

— 'Tis I entice them to the *yoke* ;

By me your crowded altars smoke ;

For mortals boldly dare the *noose*,

Secure that *death* will set them loose.

Marriage, the holy ordinance of heav'n,
Was sure intended for *proportion'd minds* ;
For our chief earthly comfort ; and t'encrease
Sweet lovely images of God 'mongst men.

—Is it not then most strange,
 To see that parents now-a-days pervert it :
 Basely pervert it to th' increase of *wealth* ;
 Make it a trade of human merchandize ;
 Bart'ring away the *peace* and *happiness*
 Of their own offspring.

F A B L E XXXII.

The Fop, the Cock, and the DIAMOND.

C'EASE, *erring man*, nor *nature* blame ;
 'Tis not from *her* thy mis'ry came ;
Her wants are few ; and those we find,
 Sustain the *bliss* of human kind ;
 They're all supplied with ease ; and hence
 First flow the meaner joys of *sense* :
 Their aim yet nobler, next they prove
 The source of *bounty* and of *love* :
 And last, from *love* and *bounty* flow
 The *noblest joys that minds can know*.
 —But *Vice*, in men of *wanton* heart,
 Soon forg'd the various wants of Art :

And

128 FABLES IN VERSE.

And these indeed are treach'rous things ;
From these *inve[r]t'rate* *evil* springs :
These (more than man can e'er supply
Exempt from *pain* and *misery*)
Supply'd, the joy is *transient*, vain ;
And, not supply'd, prove *real pain*.
Hence CARE his iron reign began,
The *creature* and the *curse* of man :
This truth, that ev'ry head may reach,
A tale in easy strains shall teach.

'Tis this :

— A mortal, *not content*
With what, for mankind, *nature* meant,
Tho' fortune, to his just desire,
Had freely giv'n *food*, *clothes*, and *fire* ;
Still *restless*, wanted something new,
And *frantic schemes* of *pleasure* drew ;
To *use* for ever adding *show* ;
In short, he dwindled to a *Beau*.
Straight on his coat he clapp'd *gold lace*,
And next with *washes* spoil'd his face :
But most of all he priz'd his *ring* :
The *dearest*, *prettiest*, *sparkling thing* :

'Twas

FABLES IN VERSE. 129

'Twas this that gave him half his air;
'Twas this he play'd against the *fair*:
Conscious of *worth* when this was on,
He mov'd as proud as *Spanish Don*.
But who can tell the *cares* that stole
With all these fopp'ries on his soul?
To dress—at first the other name
For hiding decently our shame,
He made to signify an art
Which acts a quite contrary part;
Which turn'd him on himself a foe,
And set his follies out to show:
This cost him so much time and pain,
'Twas *Happiness*' and *Virtue's bane*:
Besides, it griev'd his soul to find
Some brutes to all his *merit* blind:
To flight him when he'd spent a day
To dress and paint him for the play!
'Twas pungent *grief* succeeding *care*,
And more than *Cato's* self cou'd bear:
Still worse you'll think it, when I tell ye,
That for his *back* he pinch'd his *belly*.
But ah! the worst is still behind,
And fortune prov'd yet more unkind:

S

He

130 FABLES IN VERSE.

He lost the *ring* we nam'd before ;
And what could fate to *curse* him more !
It's borrow'd rays withdrawn, that fed
Those *weeds*, his *joys*, by folly bred ;
As real woe his heart deprest,
As ever heav'd a *patriot's* breast ;
He *wept*, he *rav'd*, and o'er and o'er
Outrageously he *stamp'd* and *swore* :
The *dear delighting* toy away,
No more he *sparkled* at the play ;
Blush'd to be seen the *gem* without,
Where once it threw its rays about :
Nor could his purse afford to buy
What might as well it's place supply.
At length, through *disappointed pride*,
The wretch grew stupid, mop'd and dy'd.

—Meanwhile the guiltless Diamond lay
Safe from the beams of rival day,
Beneath a dunghill's peaceful load,
That fac'd a *farmer's* blest abode ;
And long had there been, free from prate,
Noise, nonsense, essence, p**, and state :
'Till once a *Cock*, by hunger taught,
Rak'd out the *gem*, unpriz'd, unsought ;

For

FABLES IN VERSE. 131

For he ne'er turn'd his thought to find
The *polish'd woes* of human kind.

What faithful nature crav'd, to gain
Was all he sought, nor sought in vain :
No *fancy'd want*, no distant prize,
Had taught th' *eternal sigh* to rise.
Fit bounds his *wishes* all controul,
And fix the *quiet* of his soul.

In vain the *gay temptation* prov'd,
His virtue firm, remain'd unmov'd ;
And tho' he thought a *gem* might deck
As well his tail, as lady's neck,
He spurn'd the splendid bait aside
With just disdain, and comely pride ;
And, smiling, straight he thus exprest
The thought farcastic of his breast :

—“ Whence, and what art thou, *tawdry thing* ?

“ From thee what *happiness* can spring ?

“ Let *senseless man*, with antic *pride*,

“ Bid *pageant* rise, and *use* subside,

“ We *birds*, with *nobler sapience* blest,

“ Their *peace-destroying arts* detest :

S 2

“ Two

132 FABLES IN VERSE.

" Two things alone can give me pain ;
" Dame Partlet's coyness—want of grain.
" Their wants so monstrous grow, their joy
" A thousand little turns destroy ;
" A thousand things must all unite,
" Ere they can taste one hour's delight.
" Fools ! all to reason's scale reduce,
" And weigh the value to the use.
" Then one full grain of gen'rous wheat
" (Ye pow'rs ! how wholesome, plump and
 sweet !)
" Will dearer prove, by far, than all
" The shining nothings round the ball."

Who reads this fable with discerning mind,
Perhaps this plain advice imply'd will find ;
Take freely all that nature's wants require,
But check the first excess of frail desire :
For food she asks, and raiment, we agree ;
But never ask'd brocade, or fricassee.
— Howe'er, what custom calls genteel, or neat,
That (if thy purse affords it) wear and eat ;
Yet all above thy friend's inferior lot,
Still learn to prize, as tho' thou priz'd it not ;
All above thine, with care devoutly shun,
Or be ambitious, restless, and undone.

FABLE

F A B L E XXXIII.

The TRAVELLER and RAINBOW.

A Gaudy *Rainbow*, vivid, gay,
Resplendent with the various ray,
Arrests a trav'ller's raptur'd gaze,
While thus he cries, in great amaze,
‘ Heav'ns! what a sight! how rich a glow!
‘ Can art a scene thus lovely show?
‘ The pallet this emboss'd with teints,
‘ That Nature uses when she paints:
‘ And such an *arch*! It sure supports
‘ *Olympus*, and the Thund'r'er's courts;
‘ The hemisphere bestriding wide;
‘ Magnificent, from side to side:
‘ Would *Jove* but mount me to yon sphere,
‘ Where I might view this *wonder* near,
‘ Where I might all its glories trace,
‘ Which distance greatly must efface;
‘ Would *Jove* but grant me this request,
How thankful should I be! how blest!’

—No

134 FABLES IN VERSE

—No sooner said, than quick as thought,
Aloft, in distant air, he's caught ;
'Mid floating vapours chill'd near death,
'Mid fogs almost depriv'd of breath ;
When words like these, in accents clear,
Strike the affrighted trav'ller's ear :

—“ What late your admiration drew,
“ In genuine colours here you view ;
“ Mere *earth-born vapours, mist and rain,*
“ Rais'd by the *sun*, here floats amain ;
“ Which, gilded by his beams, appear
“ So beauteous to your lower sphere ;
“ To dazzle wond'ring eyes, and show
“ What outward ornaments can do.
“ Learn hence with caution to decide
“ On objects at a distance spy'd ;
“ Nor think that fortune's smiles impart
“ True bliss to ev'ry *garter'd heart* :
“ There's many gaudy flow'rs contain,
“ Within their core, a cank'rous bane.
“ Learn too that *men* who often show,
“ When distant, like the *splendid bow*,
“ If nearer search'd, prove *fogs* at best
“ By an illusive sun-beam drest.”

—Ended the speech, the Trav'ller found
Himself replac'd upon the ground. FA-

F A B L E XXXIV.

The Two Mice and the Linnet;

O R,

The Pleasure Seekers;

O R,

The Way to Happiness.

THE world's important question this ;
‘ *How shall we gain substantial bliss?*’
BE VIRTUOUS.—“ What is VIRTUE then ? ”
‘ ‘ Tis *love unfeign'd* to God and men.
Love most thy God ; and next in place
Thy brethren—all of human race :
Nor let thy charity expire
In useless wishes ; mere desire !
Thy large munificence extend
Beyond the *brother, father, friend* ;
Then *bless'd in blessing*, thou shalt know
The *most exalted bliss* below ;

And

136 FABLES IN VERSE.

And still as you approach in *love*,
Approach in *happiness* to *Jove* :
All other schemes of *bliss* are *vain*,
And for thy *labour* give thee *pain*.

—This truth in stronger light to show,
—The muse recounts the tale below:

Two Mice of wit, who clearly saw
That *paunch* was *God*, and *will* was *law* ;
Disdaining whims by *dotards* taught,
Of *joys* posseſſ'd in *secret thought* ;
Resolv'd, that *self* their views should bound,
And each *intemp'rate wish* be crown'd ;
Of ev'ry scheme preferring this,
To crown life's scanty span with *bliss*.

And now, their diff'ring tastes to please,
One sought for *pomp*, and one for *ease* :
The first soon found (so fortune will'd)
A prelate's pantry nobly fill'd ;
Where nature lay disguis'd in art,
And either *India* in a tart :
From the chief bed some down he stole,
Of pow'r to lull a titled soul ;

On

FABLES IN VERSE. 137

On this he slept amidst his store,
And what could *bis ambition* more !
But frequent revels thro' the house,
Amidst this plenty starv'd the *mouse* ;
E'en at the noon of peaceful night
Awak'd, he'd start with wild affright.
Resolv'd at length these *woes* to end,
He fighing went to seek his *friend* ;
Whom in a barn, retir'd from noise,
He thought possess'd the calmest joys ;
He reach'd the place—a sylvan scene ;
For ever calm, for ever green,
And while new hopes distend his breast,
These thoughts his *anxious friend* exprest'd :

‘ Alas ! to this devoted place,
‘ The seat of dulness and disgrace ;
‘ Thy feet, what wayward fortune drew ?
‘ I just was setting out to you :
‘ These scenes once *pleas'd*, but now they
 tire,
‘ No new delights awake desire :
‘ With *solitude* and *silence curst*,
‘ With *grief* I pine, with *spleen* I burst ;

T

‘ And

138 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ And would you know the *fears* I feel ?

‘ Yon *owl* designs me for a meal.’

—He ceas’d — his guest in turn repeats

The *plague* of *pomp*, and *plenty*’s seats :

Then both agreed, in *sad despair*,

To run from thence, they knew not where.

With *anguish* long they devious stray’d,

And reach’d at length a lonely glade ;

It seem’d a place where silence taught

Ethereal paths to tow’ring thought,

But soon soft airs melodious rise,

And music lives, and silence dies :

Smit with surprize, they trac’d the sound,

And, *white* with *age*, a *linnet* found.

Wond’ring, they ask’d, those glooms among,

What *joys* could prompt the *jocund* song ?

At such an age, in such a place,

What stamp’d that *pleasure* on his face ?

The *bird* reply’d,

“ An exile here,

“ I *smile* secure from *care* and *fear* ;

“ O’er *youthful scenes* reflection strays,

“ And I re-live my *pristine days* ;

“ When

FABLES IN VERSE. 139

“ When active virtue, love sincere,
“ Beam’d joy around my scanty sphere;
“ When full those joys to me return’d,
“ And in my breast reflected burn’d:
“ Nor mourn I that advent’rous song
“ Which durst accuse the great of wrong;
“ Tho’ pow’r incens’d, with stern decree,
“ For truths, invidious banish’d me:
“ And now serene for death I wait,
“ Nor fear th’ expected hand of fate;
“ For there are shades beyond the sky,
“ Where birds on sweeter gales shall fly;
“ Where endless youth shall fill my veins,
“ And joy shall prompt immortal strains;
“ These hopes uncloud my parting day,
“ And age still chaunts a cheerful lay.”

Convinc’d, yet wond’ring, smit with truth,
The wand’lers mourn’d departed youth;
Conscious their search for joy was vain,
They saw the bird the prize obtain;
And one with strong impulse began
To counsel thus, both mouse and man.

140 FABLES IN VERSE.

No joys of sense, like conscious goodness please,
More bright than glory, and more soft than ease;
In prospect these enchant the treach'rous eye,
Yet when approach'd, illusive fleet and die:
Still others spring, still tempt, and cheat the same,
While hop'd for—mountains; when possess'd—a name.
—So charms a cloud with ev'ry colour gay,
When from afar it breaks the seven-fold ray;
But if we reach it, we discern no more
The flatt'ring vapour so admir'd before.
'Tis virtue reigning in the gen'rous heart,
Alone, can true substantial bliss impart;
Virtue strong-beaming, tho' our noon be past,
Bids life's short day be splendid to the last;
Charms pain and sickness in the saint and sage,
And melts to joy the boar of freezing age;
In want, content unenvy'd wealth bestows,
In sickness, patience; and in pomp, repose:
All joys arise at her invoking breath;
A life of rapture from the womb of death.

FABLE

FABLES IN VERSE. 141

F A B L E XXXV.

The Dog and the Crane;

O R,

TRUE CHRISTIAN HEROISM.

THESE precepts how divinely great,
“ Love thou the wretch who stoops
to hate ;
“ Relieve the fainting hungry foe ;
“ And emulate the GOD, below !”
All joys, to those th’ observance brings,
Are trifles, toys, and empty things ;
Unmatch’d his *bliss*, whose *godlike mind*,
Sublime ! unconquerably kind !
Ingratitude affails in vain ;
As *Albion’s* cliffs the restless main.
Of this I sing — indulge the tale,
If truth’s conspicuous through the veil.

A mongrel *Dog*, a furly elf,
Who ne’er lov’d ought beside himself,

A *shepherd’s*

142 FABLES IN VERSE.

A shepherd's irksome service left,
And liv'd a vagrant beast on theft ;
As once, half chew'd, he gorg'd his prey,
A splinter'd bone obstructs the way ;
This to remove, all arts in vain
He'd try'd, near dead with fear and pain,
No friend the woods and plains among,
Alone; forlorn, he crawl'd along :
Near him at length a Crane he spies,
But views the bird with hopeless eyes ;
Tho' well her pow'r to save was known,
Whose taper beak cou'd reach the bone ;
For who to him, a worthless thief,
By pity mov'd, wou'd bring relief ?
Some other motive then to find,
He ply'd his half-distracted mind,
And hit on that which whilom made,
Poor friendship dwindle to a trade ;
When gen'rous love in man grew cold,
And mutual aid was bought and sold.
So to the bird, in feeble tone,
He made the dire disaster known,
Adding (to make assistance sure)
That vast rewards attend the cure.

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 143

The *Crane* at once comply'd, and drew
The latent splinter forth to view.
The *savage*, freed from pain and fear,
Beheld his *friend* with scornful sneer;
‘ What! now no doubt you want your *hire*,
‘ Thou mercenary fool—retire’!
(The thankless *ruffian* taunting said)
‘ And thank me that you wear your head.’

The gen'rous *bird* reply disdain'd,
And spurn'd the ground the *wretch* pro-
phan'd,
Look'd up with yet unanger'd eye,
And clapt her wings, and sought the *sky*;
Conscious she greater worth possess'd,
Than thought to him could e'er suggest,
Who held no good was e'er design'd
Without return, in *gold* or *kind*;
Pleas'd *she* reflects, with *virtuous pride*,
Herself that gen'rous aid supply'd;
Nor hop'd nor wish'd the proffer'd *hire*,
For *wealth*'s beneath a *Crane*'s desire.

The *Dog*, mean time, with inward pain,
Her careless air and just disdain

Beheld;

144 FABLES IN VERSE.

Beheld ; and curs'd the glorious fight,
With all the rage of frustrate spite ;
Than keen reproach it stung him more,
And gave a pang unfeet before ;
He turns, abhorrent of the day,
And grinds his fangs, and stalks away.
With persevering feet behind,
Him *justice* trac'd, tho' *lame* and *blind* ;
When next he tasted *murder'd* food,
He found his late mischance renew'd ;
Another bone his *throat* retains,
And doubles all his former pains ;
At once a thousand thoughts combin'd,
Like light'ning flash'd upon his mind ;
They stung, they blasted as they came,
With conscious *guilt*, *remorse*, and *shame* ;
Where'er he turn'd his dying eyes,
He sees *insulted Cranes* arise ;
His *forfeit word*, ill omen'd sound !
He hears in all the echoes round.

“ Will now the *bird*, my *friend* so late,
“ Again redeem my life from fate ?

Wou'd

FABLES IN VERSE. 145

“ Wou’d she, if found again, believe
“ The tongue that speaks but to deceive?
“ And who, of all that wing the sky,
“ But know my crime as well as I?
“ The injur’d *Crane* wou’d never fail,
“ To publish this to ev’ry gale:
“ Curs’d *Dog*—to guile more curs’d a prey:”
He groan’d, as stretch’d on earth he lay.
A bird who heard him thus complain,
Flew straight and told her friend the *Crane*:
She hasten’d th’ expiring wretch to find,
Who thus display’d his *rankling mind*:
“ Oh! worse than death! detested sight!
“ Receive me *hell*! surround me *night*!
“ Com’st thou to blast my dying ear?
“ Why take thy wish—I’m bound to hear:
“ *Reproach* and *insult*, *scorn* and *hate*,
“ Come all—and urge the hand of fate.”

Conscious of worth superior, smil’d
The *Crane*, and thus his fears beguil’d:
“ Learn nobler thoughts--look up, an’ trace
The marks of *mercy* in my face;

146 FABLES IN VERSE

- I court the nobler task, to show
- That *virtue* still resides below,
- To make thy stubborn soul conceive
- There are, who, wrong'd, can still relieve :
- Thy life again I come to give,
- And more—a pattern *how to live*,

The *Cur*, tho' still of guile afraid,
Knew death was sure without her aid ;
Since then his death could be but sure,
He thought it best to risque a cure.
Again the *Crane* exerts her art ;
The splinter leaves the wounded part :
The *Dog*, astonish'd, dumb with awe,
Th' exalted bounty felt, and saw ;
Grov'ling in dust, he dar'd not meet
Her eye, but crawl'd and lick'd her feet.
Contempt itself, and just *disdain*,
Had giv'n but half the *shame* and *pain*.

Methinks I see, supremely fair,
Erect, th' inhabitant of air ;
Methinks, with *kindred joy*, I trace
The *bliss* that kindles in her face,

The

FABLES IN VERSE. 147

The *glories* gathering round her head,
While thus the *vanquish'd* sinner said :

“ Oh! wond’rous child of bounteous Jove!
“ I sink beneath the weight of love ;
“ Oh! let me find some happy way,
“ One mite of this vast debt to pay ;
“ Lest, while you thus profusely blefs,
“ Your kindness should too much oppress.
“ Make me henceforth your faithful slave,
“ And deign to use the life you gave ;
“ So shall I dare once more to rise,
“ Once more to meet those friendly eyes,
“ Which else ’tis certain death to see ;
“ Nor Death himself could wound like thee.”

The *bird* reply'd, ' You owe me nought ;
• I've gain'd the sole reward I sought ;
• The *joy*, the *glory*, to impart
• The *virtue* that first warm'd thy heart ;
• To *heav'n* thy adoration pay,
• It's *servant* *I*, who pleas'd obey :
• The *Gods*, for ever *good* and *wise*,
• Who mark our faults with pitying eyes,

148 FABLES IN VERSE.

‘ Their *justice* thus with *mercy* mix,
‘ Our feet in *virtue’s paths* to fix.
‘ *Be virtuous then and bleſt*,’ she said,
Exulting clapp’d her wings and fled.

The *Dog* arose, resolv’d no more
A thief to prowl the country o’er ;
He sought his rightful master’s cot,
Tho’ long deserted, not forgot ;
As near the peaceful place he drew,
A *wily Fox* he caught and flew ;
With this his peace at home he made,
Receiv’d, forgiv’n, no more he stray’d ;
Was ever found at *Colin’s* side,
A *faithful servant* till he dy’d.

Can then th’ *ungrateful* render *virtue* vain,
When all may taste the *pleasures* of the *Crane*?
Shall he who sighs for glory dye the field,
When nobler laurels *bloodless conquests* yield ?
Without return, who *perseveres* to *bless*,
The *hero’s pleasures*, and his *palm posseſſs* ;
While those who *barter services away*,
Are *venal bands*, and only gain their pay.
Brave in all fortunes be the *gen’rous* mind,
Friend to it’s *foes*, and to the *thankless* kind ;

Since

FABLES IN VERSE. 149

Since the *steel'd breast*, on which thy *bounty's* shed,
But throws a *brighter radiance* round thy head ;
While *grateful minds* contract thy *virtue's* blaze,
For in *their own*, they half absorb *thy praise*.

GENERAL INFERENCE;

OR,

FINAL APPLICATION.

FLY vice, O mortals ! fatal, treach'rous maid !

Nor be by her *false, flatt'ring wiles* betray'd :
Tho' *virtue's* turf disclose a fainter green,
Tho' in her path some *threat'ning danger's* seen,

Each *thorn* that *threatens*, ev'ry *weed* that grows
In *virtue's* path, at length more *sweets* bestows,
Than can in all the *tracks of vice* be found ;
Where ev'ry *flow'r* ret charms us but to wound :
All mourn, who in the cause of *vice* engage ;
A *youth enervate*, and a *painful age*.
A *sickly, stupid mass*, if *reason* flies ;
Or, if *she* linger, *impotently wise* :

A thought-

150 FABLES IN VERSE.

A thoughtless train, who, *pamper'd, sleek,
and gay,*

Invite *old age*, and revel youth away ;
From *life's fresh vigor* move the *load of care*,
And idly place it where they least can bear.
When to the *mind*, diseas'd, for aid they fly,
What kind reflection can the *mind supply*?
When, with *lost health*, what should the loss
allay,

Peace, PEACE is lost :---a comfortless decay !

By *virtue's friends*, when youth, when
pleasure flies,

And earth's frail beauties fade before their eyes,
Thro' death's dark vista flow'ry paths are seen,
Elysian plains, and groves for ever green :
If o'er their *lives* a refluent glance they cast,
Their's is the present, from the well-spent past :
Life has it's bliss for these, when *past it's bloom*,
As wither'd roses yield a *late perfume*.

“ Know then this truth, (enough for
man to know)

“ *VIRTUE alone is happiness below :*

“ The

FABLES IN VERSE. 151

“ The only point where *human bliss* stands still,
“ And tastes the *good* without the fall to *ill* ;
“ Where only *merit* constant pay receives,
“ Is blest in what it *takes*, and what it *gives* ;
“ The *joy unequall'd*, if it's end it *gain* ,
“ And if it *lose*, attended with *no pain* ;
“ Without *satiety*, tho' e'er so *bless'd* ,
“ And but *more relish'd* as the more *distress'd* ;
“ The *broadest mirth* unfeeling *folly* wears,
“ *Less pleasing* far than *Virtue's* very *tears* ;
“ *Good*, from each *object*, from each *place*
 acquir'd,
“ For ever *exercis'd*, yet *never tir'd* ;
“ Never *elated* while *one man's* *oppress'd* ,
“ Never *dejected* while *another's* *bless'd* ;
“ And where no *wants*, no *wishes* can remain,
“ Since but to *wish* more *virtue* is to *gain*. ”

F I N I S.



